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THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

A SYSTEM OF DOGMATICS

Der christliche Glaube

BY

THEODORE HAERING, D.D.

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TÜBINGEN

TRANSLATED FROM THE SECOND REVISED AND ENLARGED GERMAN EDITION, 1912

BY

JOHN DICKIE, M.A.

PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY IN KNOX COLLEGE, DUNEDIN

AND

GEORGE FERRIES, D.D.

AUTHOR OF "THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIAN FAITH"

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FROM THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THROUGHOUT the work I have sought to improve the contents; e.g. at the outset, in the definition of the Nature of Religion, the influence of the most recent discussions on Schleiermacher and Calvin as well as on the History of Religion and Philosophy will be observed. The systematic scheme of Apologetics is largely rewritten, the section on Providence, Origin of Sin, etc. By means of the former alteration I hope that I have met the objections referring to the epistemological foundation of my Dogmatics, to the effect that I have under-estimated the most recent metaphysical essays, or at all events have not sufficiently recognized the task incumbent on the theologian, of exhibiting not merely the limits of knowledge, but the unity of faith and knowledge. I was specially concerned when treating the points that fall to be considered in the case, to elucidate the principle that our Christian Faith has not to do with a multiplicity of so-called mysteries, but with a real mystery which forms a unity, one that has been revealed in God's gracious approach to man, but which also continually occasions fresh enigmas, while giving the assurance of eternal deliverance from them. With

good reason we may hope that the future will gain a new understanding of this mystery; while the numerous ostensible mysteries have already lost the power of impressing the present age, as a result of the whole development of man's mental life, a development which has its principal ground in the training imparted by the Gospel itself. The satisfaction which I have had from the assent given by critics of different types to this particular principle, I should like to express by applying it still more strictly and extensively.

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INTRODUCTION

A SYSTEM of Dogmatics seriously intended to be of service to the present generation may fitly begin with a consideration which though very simple and obvious is yet often lost sight of. When we think of the history of our religion, and in particular of its theology with which we get familiar, our first instinctive impression is of its great length. As a matter of fact, the contents are infinitely extensive and infinitely varied. But it is well to emphasize at the same time that after all the history is but a short one. Only a century has elapsed since Kant and Schleiermacher; it is not yet two since the Age of the Enlightenment or four since the Reformation; everywhere on all hands new circumstances and new problems confront us. The Gospel has scarcely begun to work out the new problems, or to be at home in the new circumstances: this we are obliged to confess, if we really believe that the Gospel purports to be for all times. To remember that our religion has so short a history is a safeguard against overweening pretensions, and inspires patience and hopefulness. To think of the history as very long is apt to make us disheartened and discontented, and to lead to unwarranted depreciation of our actual possessions. We expect too much and in consequence have less than we might have; in particular we allow ourselves to be distressed more than is necessary, when forms of our faith which have been venerated and dear to our hearts, cease to be.

We should be better protected against such dangers, if only we remembered the nature of religion, and of our own religion and especially of theology. Religion lives by the revelation of mystery quite as much as by the mystery of revelation, by what it is hoping and struggling for as well as by what it already possesses. That theology in particular is dead which is not always gaining for itself anew out of ever new experience the religious ideas it has inherited from the past. Because we are so apt to forget this fundamental truth, we are oppressed by the seeming length of the history, while under the impression of the length of the history we lose sight of the fundamental truth. Consequently the simple observation, to which we referred at the beginning as too little attended to, might furnish our starting point. It encourages us to face the problem of Dogmatics from the very outset in all its difficulty. The very magnitude of our subject is at the same time its problem.

Every science begins with a view of its scope, says what it aims at doing, and with this goal before it, fits itself into the whole of knowledge, defining its special place there. This initial proceeding in itself occasions no greater difficulty in the science of the Christian Faith than in other sciences. Nevertheless even those introductory statements of the scope of Dogmatics are received with SUSPICION in many quarters, while in other sciences like statements are often taken for granted without any foundation being laid for them.

The name of our science does not immediately concern us at this stage. We may use the expression Science of Faith, as well as the expression Dogmatics; as yet we have given no detailed explanation in any case. Even at this early stage, we might of course

point out that the word Faith sometimes denotes living piety in general, and sometimes the religious knowledge in particular which is inseparably bound up with it. But meanwhile it suffices to note this variety in the terminology: quite too many conditions are wanting at the outset for us to be able to understand it fully. After all, it is a dispute about words, when it is asked whether we are to speak of the Science of Faith or of Dogmatics: the expression Science of Faith does not by any means necessarily imply that objective truth is undervalued. At the same time we can most quickly explain the reason for the suspicion of which we speak by starting with the term Dogmatics. Dogmatics is the presentation of Dogmas in a coherent system. *Dogma* means originally both an opinion and a decree, that is something settled by intellect or by will and having application to intellect or will in others. Thus it specifies further only such a matter as has been defined with the greatest possible precision. Later, the stress comes to be laid on its being something settled, but settled of course on good grounds, and so well-established or generally acknowledged; and the word is applied especially to the distinctive fundamental principles of thought and conduct prevalent in the philosophical schools of Greece, or in ecclesiastical usage to the saving truths authoritative in the Christian Church. This *claim to truth* is the decisive point; this claim is the chief ground on which the very first steps in Dogmatics encounter a suspicion so widely diffused, and barring all further progress. But in the light of what we say, it is clear that though such suspicion is directed with special force against the term Dogma and Dogmatics, it likewise exists in principle if we use the expression Doctrine of the Faith or the scientific presentation of the Christian Faith. What is really under suspicion is the truth of

Christianity. Nor does it make any difference, as regards this decisive point, whether we have in view the old Dogma in the first instance, confining this conception in the strict sense to the religious doctrines of Christianity formulated with the help of the Ancient Philosophy (Harnack), or including the form which these received when taken up into the Old Protestant Dogmatics (Loofs); or whether we demand a "new Dogma" (J. Kaftan), or hold a brief for "undogmatic Christianity" (Dreyer). Important as these distinctions are in their own place, they do not come into consideration here. For both the old Dogma and the new, and undogmatic Christianity, claim to be true. Otherwise it would not be worth while to speak of them. The "endeavour to exhibit the doctrines of the faith in their universal validity" is common to all theologians. Thus there arises of necessity for all of them the task of coming to an understanding with regard to everything that claims to be truth at each period; for of course we are concerned with doctrines of faith as existing in a definite religion. The dispute referred to about the word Dogma springs from the Catholic conception of the Church, one to which a very definite conception of the truth of faith necessarily corresponds; whereas our Evangelical conception of the Church has likewise a definite, but an entirely different, conception of the truth of faith corresponding to it (Cf. F. Kattenbusch and O. Ritschl).

The same decisive question faces us when Dogmatics, or the science of the Christian Faith, takes its place in the wider province of *Theology*, as the science of Christianity; Theology itself being classed with Knowledge in general. Dogmatics constitutes along with Ethics, in other words the presentation of the Christian Faith along with that of the Christian Life, *Systematic*

Theology. This is distinguished from Historical (Biblical Science and Church History) and Practical. Historical Theology is not directly liable to attack, for it does not have to decide whether the Christian Faith and Life which it sets forth are valid for us, or are simply, as some might hold, a historical fact, full of significance it is true, but now outgrown. On the other hand, the function of Systematic Theology is to deal with this very question of the truth of Christianity, and the answer reached must determine our attitude towards Practical Theology, the doctrine of how the truth once it is recognized is to be applied and appropriated. A thing admittedly untrue might indeed be upheld on grounds of expediency, but at the most only for a time. In that case, however, as time went on, even Historical Theology would cease to exist as a branch of Theology and would be left for the general history of religion to deal with. Thus the idea of Theology in general falls under suspicion with many on the same grounds as Dogmatics, but not because the definition and division of it are in themselves either difficult or doubtful. No more is the suspicion due, as is often supposed, to the circumstance that theology, when fitted into its place in the round of knowledge generally, is designated a *positive science* (Schleiermacher), that is one which combines for a practical purpose the elements of knowledge which it requires. For in this sense, medicine is unquestionably a positive science, since it places the various natural sciences and portions of psychology at the service of suffering humanity ; or the science of jurisprudence, which turns to account certain portions of the mental and moral sciences for behoof of the State. No one calls in question the right of medicine so long as there is a sick person, or that of jurisprudence so long as there is a State. But many dispute the right of the Church, and therefore also the right

of a science in the service of the Church, and it is because they dispute the inherent right, that is, the truth of the religion which the Church represents, that the right of the Church is questioned by them.

Science of the Faith, they tell us, is a self-contradiction. This is not to say that it is impossible to construct logically unassailable concepts of the subject-matter of faith, and to combine these concepts in logically correct judgments. Surely, for example, mediaeval Scholasticism is a lasting monument of such a type of Dogmatics. But yet faith and knowledge are regarded as being in their inmost essence irreconcilable opposites. This proposition is understood in three distinct ways. According to one of these, religious experiences have the peculiarity of defying exact scientific treatment. Opponents of very different types are at one with friends of religion in the suspicion that knowledge endangers the (supposed or actual) supernatural character of the objects of faith, sullying their purity and shattering their certainty. All doctrine of the faith, we are told, kills the faith ; its concepts are pressed flowers, petrified life, a strait waistcoat for the spirit of freedom. When such ideas are taken quite seriously in Church life, the demand is for lay-preaching, instead of theologically trained pastors. While among those referred to, the traditional conceptions of faith are clung to by many as sacred and unassailable, with more determination in proportion as a scientific presentation of them is objected to, others declare them to be more or less of indifferent significance, on the ground that everything really depends on immediate experience in feeling. Not a few, who are influenced by the modern History of Religion, hold this conviction in the sense of a vaguely mystical religiosity. But both classes, though so much opposed to each other in practice, share the persuasion that faith and knowledge

are incommensurable entities. Still more dangerous is the other sense of this proposition regarding the contradiction between faith and knowledge; viz.—Christian Dogmatics does not merely seek generally to furnish us with true propositions concerning God and His relation to us: it claims to possess the perfect truth upon these subjects. Now every science, we are told, is engaged in approximating to the truth, and searching for it; to claim to possess *the* truth is a palpable absurdity. We all know how timid even convinced supporters of our faith have become in speaking of its absoluteness. They think they must forego this in order to evade at least the third most serious objection to the proposition that faith and knowledge are opposites. This proposition, we must admit, may have the further meaning, and it is the most prevalent one, that the world of faith confronted by knowledge necessarily becomes an illusion.

But the full significance of this suspicion under which Dogmatics labours will not be as clear as it should be when we are dealing with a subject where suspicion is so rife, unless we ask more precisely *in what form* and *to what extent* it prevails. Not primarily, nor chiefly, in the form of clear knowledge. On the contrary, the ignorance with reference to the subjects dealt with by Dogmatics is often as marked as the confidence with which Dogmatics is condemned. We must add indeed that there is often quite as dense ignorance regarding the nature of knowledge. It is very usual, as we ourselves have seen, to condemn faith in the name of knowledge, without feeling in any way bound to have anything like a clear conception of knowledge. In fact, it is in regard to this latter point that the greatest difficulties arise; only a person should at least be conscious of them. For our own sakes, therefore, as well as for the sake of our opponents, we recall in passing the division of the

sciences into those of nature and those of mind, based upon a distinction of subject-matter, as it presents itself at all events to the first glance. We next call attention to the much more important distinction among the sciences, according as they deal essentially with facts, or with values and normative principles. What a difference there is in the meaning of the term " normative science " as applied to Logic, Esthetics, and Ethics! How distinct in kind is the validity of such normative principles in the respective sciences! How independent of subjective judgment is it in Logic; how dependent, though not in the same way, in Esthetics and Ethics! How varied is the relation of the values to the facts, and how peculiar is this relation in religion of all subjects (God the reality of supreme value)! While all these serious questions are often scarcely considered by our opponents, we may pass the judgment that the opposition largely manifests itself not in the form of clear knowledge, but as a feeling of unfriendliness which refuses to have anything to do with the matter. This explains the wide diffusion of the opposition as regards extent. A frame of mind exerts an influence far beyond the circle where deliberately thought out grounds are found. Lately one might read that " the Christian faith is for the parsons, for widows" (formerly the statement used to be at least more general—for women) "and for children". Or " for theologians it is the daily bread, for other men an affair of festival days, and for those who no longer attend church it is nothing at all, or only an occasion of fruitless speculation and still more fruitless discord ". This widespread antipathy is by no means always a matter of conscious opposition, but rather of self-evident indifference. In spite of the enormous differences in the situation, we may recall the saying of Bishop Butler in the age of the Enlightenment, in reference to the educated

classes of his day, that for them Christianity is but a fiction, a matter which is now not so much as a subject of inquiry. Only we have to add that, at present, this does not by any means apply to the educated classes alone; it is true of the masses in their whole extent. Thus it is necessary to say something with reference to the general mental soil on which that antipathy to the Christian faith grows; viz., the state of mind known as the *Modern Consciousness*.

To be sure, every period has appeared to itself to be new, in comparison to that which preceded; and frequently too in history the word "modern" has been employed to express that feeling. Still it would give proof of shallow thought if we failed to recognize that hitherto it has never been so generally used with such self-consciousness as at present. For many centuries the Christian civilization of the West, in the sense of the authoritative Church (Troeltsch), had for one reason or another been acknowledged as the dominating Power; and so it continued to be till the Enlightenment, although Protestantism introduced some fundamental modernizations. Autonomy, Subjectivism, Individualism, as against objective authority; Immanence as contrasted with supernatural Transcendence—these positions, understood in the pointed sense which they receive in our day, are "modern".

At the close of the century, newspapers of repute invited opinions as to what had been the most important acquisition of the century that was nearing its end. They received from acknowledged representatives of the Modern Consciousness, the strangest answers: electricity, colonization, socialism, the emancipation of woman, extreme individualism, spiritualism and theosophy, the thoroughgoing extension of the law of causality to nature and history, the doctrine of evolution, the

feeling for reality, universal nervous sensibility. Some by no means adversely disposed to the modern spirit called attention besides to the widely current inclination to exaggerate some chance popular craze, were it only vegetarianism, into a philosophy of the universe, and to the widespread ignorance of the very rudiments of the conditions which really control the rise of a philosophy of the universe, an ignorance asserting itself for example in the naïve question whether this or that coterie of *littérateurs* have finished their new philosophy of the universe yet. The great problem how all this is to be brought into one connected view cannot be solved, till history is in a position to look back upon it, and see things in correct perspective. We of the present day at all events cannot conceal from ourselves what enormous contrasts are included in the favourite expression "the Modern Consciousness". Often indeed it appears a definite quantity only in its negations, in its shattering of the old tables, and its prophecy of some unheard of novelty. This prophecy assumes the form at one time rather of blasé inactivity, at another rather of restless activity, but in both instances the fulfilment falls short of the promise. Still it is necessary and possible to inquire into the dominating note of this Modern Consciousness, many and varied as its notes are. Is it not a consciousness of the infinite fullness and variety of life in the world as our experience finds it—a world that is always disclosing itself more broadly and deeply to the human spirit become conscious of its strength, and asserting its lordship over nature and history by means of new and delicate methods—a consciousness, therefore, on the part of the human spirit of itself as infinite, as it constitutes a unity with the infinite world? But this consciousness of self and of the world as infinitely rich is more or less distinctly self-sufficient and self-centred.

The world is looked upon as a sum of forces which are absolutely determined, and work according to law, but are capable, both in the "natural" and in the "spiritual" life, of infinite development. The spiritual self is taken to be creator as well as creature of this world; the two together form a unity, and are self-sufficient; they have no need of a God in distinction from the world and the human spirit; the world is God and the spirit of man is King as well as servant of the world, prophet and priest of the God in question, and itself God within the world. The great watchword of this "Modern Consciousness," being its product and at the same time a contributory cause of its growth, is the doctrine of evolution, a doctrine as fruitful in results that cannot be disputed as readily applicable for the glossing over of ultimate mysteries, a doctrine that presents itself at one time in the aspect of unbounded optimism and at another in that of gnawing pessimism, and covers the most intense self-assertion as well as silent resignation. At first, of course, on account of the supposed or felt value of the upward trend of the movement, it expresses optimistic self-assertion; but on account of the vagueness of aim, and the uncertainty of the realization of it, only too often it veers round to pessimistic resignation. We note further that it is essentially as an esthetic feeling that this Modern Consciousness can and does realize itself. In its combination of discordant elements, which in many cases cannot be clearly thought out, it is rather experienced as a feeling after a harmony that transcends all contrasts than intellectually apprehended as a truth. Hence the attractiveness of "Monism" as a creed, presenting as it does the unity of all knowledge and its methods and of all reality, of Nature and Spirit, Freedom and Necessity. Very few of its adherents would be capable of defining it, still less of seeing

through the great fallacy involved in the confusion between unity and uniformity. But it is for them not so much a definite creed, as a sort of notation mark for their feeling, and it is no mere accident that music is the art most widely diffused and most highly esteemed (see further, "Ethics,"[1] pp. 39 ff., 46 ff.).

Even this brief statement will help us to understand the wide-spread disinclination to the Christian Faith of which we spoke, and also the fact that it is very vague and assumes many different forms. We have now to state that upon the whole the number of *decided antagonists* was even larger ten years ago than it is to-day. For instance, it is not so popular now as it used to be to dispose of the adherents of the Christian Faith as either weak-brained or hypocrites. That familiar alternative is too clumsy for the greater subtlety of judgment found nowadays. Indeed a number of prominent authors make the problem of religion central in their works, and the special attention they receive is partly owing to their doing so. Examples are Ibsen's unsparing criticism of the *ennui* which characterizes the "We" of "The Old and the New Faith," and the various representations of a "Seeker after God," "an enemy of theology with an ardent longing for religion," whether he continues a seeker or finds peace in a gospel like Tolstoy's. Moreover, there is an undercurrent of feeling widely prevalent that so far none of the new and loudly acclaimed theories of the universe, of which so many have been put upon the market, has won for itself a reliable and convinced body of adherents. "The man of full-formed nature, able to realize the deep longing of the age for material and ideal perfection, the new man who

[1] "The Ethics of the Christian Life," by Prof. Haering. The references are to pages of the Translation from the Second German edition, by James S. Hill, B.D.; 1909.

is God and artist of his world," is not yet born ; and the picture of this new man is on the whole rather an ornament for the hours of festive elation of the elect than a power for the hard life-struggle of the many. In the main, however, interest in mere controversy begins to slacken, and a longing for the restful calm of settled conviction arises. It has been a too frequent experience, both in our own case and in that of others, that without such peace the depth and joy necessary for the performance of any important life-work are awanting, and that the more numerous little tasks suffer from the lack of a steadying influence. Though we hear much of individual successes of Buddhism in Western Society, and even of spiritualism, from the adherents of these cults, they tend on the whole rather to perplex than to strengthen the self-confidence of the modern man, at heart at least. Moreover, there are direct counter effects of the Old Faith which cannot be overlooked. The unheard of influence of the Church of Rome becomes an importunate problem, and the despised Protestant Churches wring admiration from their enemies by their works of charity if by nothing else, since it can scarcely be mistaken in the long run that the root of these is faith. Reference may also be made in this connexion to the attitude of individuals of acknowledged standing towards Christianity. To explain the faith of a Bismarck or a Gladstone as an accidental peculiarity in their character satisfies none but the most superficial. But in spite of all this, it would also be superficial, indeed it would be a fatal delusion, if we were to assert a living approach on the part of our generation to the Christian Faith.

To be sure, our generation may show in many respects a new and greater interest in religious questions. Thousands crowd round the orators who defend the historical existence of Christ. The circulation of

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"Books upon Religion for the People" and "Vital Questions" doubtless marks a rising wave of religious interest. To this *rising wave of religion* we must deliberately turn our attention, and that too with a feeling of thankfulness; for where would a Christian be found who is not made blessed whenever and wherever the longing for God is stirred, and in whatever way this is effected? But we must also maintain our honesty, not allowing ourselves to be deceived as to the confused nature of that longing in many cases. This judgment cannot be withheld, if we bear in mind the latest widespread trend exhibited by many of our contemporaries towards mysticism. Mysticism and the modern consciousness, which were irreconcilable opposites down to the eighties of last century, are now proceeding to wed; and from the blessing attending that union, those who are by no means the most uninfluential at present are looking for the Golden Age. Longing for a full life in a world which has come to be a dead mechanism, and the need for repose in the painful haste of the present day, are the causes which originate the compact. That self-consciousness which has become infinite through the consciousness of an infinite world finds in the deepest ground of the personal self the deepest deep of the universe. "A Something is close to my inward being; a good unfathomed manifests itself there, and with this my spirit is filled." Some conceive this in quietist fashion; those of more active habit declare that religion signifies harmony with the Infinite in that one great process of development which is always straining in the upward direction; or it is the inner self-consciousness of Creation as progressive action (Bonus). Is it only "bad form in theology," if it is asked whether all that is chiefly a matter of esthetics or of religion?

At all events such facts, and others important as they are in their way, do not neutralize what we have just said about the fundamental note of the Modern Consciousness in its relation to Christianity. A proposal was recently made by men who were earnest in the matter, that leaders of culture should be requested to state their attitude towards religion and Christianity, but there was no adequate result. However, it is apparent, from the few isolated replies that did come to hand, what the nature of the reply would have been in the main. That existence as sense-perception can present it is not the true reality, that the estimates impressed upon us by our senses are not the true values, that the deepest needs of man are not satisfied in this state of existence, that for us a life of absolute worth, provided there is such a life, is to be expected only from another condition than the present,—this seems to be what is essential in the theory of the universe held by outstanding religious personalities. "This is my religion, if I have any" (Chr. Schrempf). And again,—I do not know whether I am now a Christian; "there is once more no agreement as to what Christianity is, etc." In short, God, and above all Christ, is for many people shrouded in vagueness and uncertainty. Once and for a long time there was so much definiteness and freedom from dubiety, that the commandment forbidding the taking of God's name in vain was often recalled; but at present we have again an unknown God, one as to whom there is no certainty.

In circles where the utmost diversity of opinion prevails there is agreement upon one point at least, namely that definite Christian Faith is beset by the greatest difficulties. This idea is becoming increasingly common, partly owing to the circulation of writings on right and left, the promoters of which have in view the contrary

purpose, namely the supplying of aids to Faith. As a matter of fact the word "difficulties" is much in vogue for the moment. It dominates both chance conversation and confidential talk; it comes freely to the lips of the most superficial as well as of the most earnest. This favourite word is perhaps specially characteristic of our time; it is indefinite, modest and at the same time decided as regards the decisive point. The modern man is learning to know everything that can be known in nature and history; to understand and allow for everything that can be understood and allowed for according to its own particular standard; but just for that reason fixed standards have lost their hold upon him; what is more, he has become inwardly suspicious of them. This is true especially of the moral standards, submission to an unconditioned imperative, the feeling of personal responsibility in the strictest sense of the term, in particular with reference to the province of morals in the narrower sense. All this means that the disposition to the secular frame of mind of which we spoke, the limitation of self to our unlimited world, is strong enough in many quarters to lead to a general rejection of the Christian Faith, however hesitating, contradictory and unsatisfying the attitude of the individual may be. Hesitating and undecided about many things, our age knows its mind upon that point, though the form of its rejection is often discreetly cautious. Not seldom it asserts itself in questions such as these: What then has Christianity achieved in the long centuries of its existence? Is it really for all men, and not merely for those with a special aptitude for religion? Is not the profession of it then, especially in the clerical calling, a senseless "sacrifice," which no one could expect in a matter attended with so much doubt? Quite obvious answers, as that the Gospel itself counted upon an un-

paralleled conflict, and yet claims the whole world as its own, and that it professes to be the pearl of great price for which everything else should be sacrificed, make little impression. A thing of that kind looks altogether too strange in the light of relativity.

Weighing this whole attitude in its bearings upon our special task, we return to the point from which we started—"A science of the Christian Faith is a contradiction in terms". Even if the modern Consciousness, not yet forgetting its limits in the deification of itself, lets the thought of God stand as a profound mystery, and indeed magnifies it in high-flown terms, still a knowledge of God which is precise and certain, above all if it admits of no further advance, strikes it as the acme of the irrational. Thus it is a mistake, nay a crime, if the Champion of the Faith, the Christian Church, is not fully and completely alive to the universality and extent of this opposition. In her own midst she has a proof of the strength of the enemy, in the esteem accorded Historical Theology by comparison with Systematic.

It will conduce to a clearer understanding of the whole subject under consideration, if we note explicitly that what we are saying refers entirely to the modern attitude towards conscious profession of the full Christian Faith, and not at all to the question whether in the world of to-day there are fewer *convinced adherents* of the Christian Faith than formerly. This question needs no answer for the Christian Church at any rate. For she believes that the Gospel is never left without faith, and is often amazed to see how it works faith just where there seemed to be least hope, even in those most influenced by the modern spirit; while on the other hand she is convinced that in the ages when the authority of the Christian Faith was in the main unassailed, personal faith was by no means universal.

Happily personal faith cannot be statistically computed either for the past or for the present. Indeed the Church, in the exercise of her faith, must pronounce the judgment that the wide diffusion of Unchristian and Antichristian feeling is likely to become a means of rich blessing, by making as many as possible realize the personal character of faith, and inducing them to be in earnest with God, so that He may cease to be for them a mere word, and become the Reality of all realities. As a matter of fact there is a "faith," at the disappearance of which faith must rejoice, even while realizing with profound sorrow that its disappearance entails the loss of many serviceable by-products, especially in the sphere of morals and public order, and the tearing from their moorings of large numbers who are without firm foundation, so that at first it seems as if there could be no hope for them. Faith only in the mass, merely imitative ("fides implicita" as it exists even in Protestant Churches), is dying; it is more and more coming to be the case that only personal faith can hold its own; but was there ever any other that deserved the name? Hence also, much which many look upon as unbelief is not really such; perhaps in the decisive judgment of God it is of more value than much that passes for faith. Still this is not what we are speaking of, but the actual attitude of the prevailing frame of mind to the Christian Faith; and the Christian Church and her theology must have as clear an appreciation of this as possible, because she cannot influence an age which she does not understand. She fails to understand the present age if she flatters herself that in the main the generality of people *still* take the Christian Faith in God for granted as was the case in bygone centuries. It is remarkable how often this illusion is cherished by the very same people who cannot paint the present unbelief in colours

black enough. These same people often console themselves with the thought that the attitude of "the World" to the Christian faith has always been essentially the same. But this is simply a further evidence of how dull and stupid the outlook of such observers is. Certainly individual opponents may have been even more deliberate and convinced, but the general feeling was not what we have indicated above, either in depth or in compass. Hence there are students of history possessed of unusual courage who are already considering, not without anxiety, how the next generation may endure the battle of life, seeing that it does not, like those who have gone before, inherit the capital of a religious and moral training which is founded on settled practice. Certainly it is strange that often it is just those students who do all they can to lessen and to oppose the influence of the Church. And yet this too is intelligible from the nature of the modern consciousness which we have looked at. Its trend towards what is individual and personal is doubly strong in the religious sphere; its aversion to the use of leading-strings is doubly keen. And on her part, the Church to a large extent unnecessarily exaggerates the emphasis which she lays on objective teaching, without which of course she cannot continue; partly because she is encouraged to do so by her more active members, who were not gained over in time to appreciate what is justifiable in the tendency of the age now referred to.

Should the question arise at this point, whether and how far DOGMATICS IS AT LIBERTY TO MAKE CONCESSIONS TO THIS FEELING, the Christian Church knows beforehand, quite independently of any proof, that she dare *not in principle surrender the claim which causes so much offence*, without surrendering her own *raison d'être*, be-

cause what is here at stake is not the existence of Systematic Theology as a science, but of the Christian Faith. Christianity believes itself in possession of the saving truth of God upon the basis of God's self-manifestation. If it were to exchange this assurance of the truth of its content for an opinion about God which may possibly be true, in order to avoid offending the Modern Consciousness any longer, it would be acting like a diamond polisher who worked at the precious stone till he had ground it all away. On the contrary, fro mthe inconstancy of her opponents and their lack of backbone in the matter of personal conviction, the Christian Church will gain new inspiration to hold fast the treasure of assured truth, and to give forth her light with all the more confidence, since she can encourage herself with the thought that the irreconcilable oppositions and contradictory claims of the Modern Consciousness as we have described them, have only brought into clearer relief the value of the Gospel in its fullness : now that the immensity of the world has so grown upon us, we realize ever so much more clearly the immensity of our poverty apart from the living God. There can be no question, therefore, of surrendering the claim which causes offence that Christianity possesses *the* truth of God. It is more intelligible that within the Church the proposal should be mooted from time to time to give up all claim to *knowledge* of the faith (p. 6). Nevertheless, with whatever depth of meaning believers may sound the praises of the distinctive character of faith as far transcending all knowledge, they cannot in the long run dispense with knowledge if only for the purpose of establishing their right to be indifferent to knowledge. Should they fail in this, their confidence must give way, though slowly, yet surely.

But if we cannot surrender our claim to a science

of the faith out of deference either to the unbeliever or to unintelligent faith, even at this early stage, the true nature of such a science emerges in principle. That is to say, it becomes evident that *no Dogmatic of any age is identical with the saving truth of the Christian Faith.* Its office is to set forth this truth for its own age, and thus it passes away along with the age to which it belongs. Dogmatics must remember that in the next generation it belongs to the History of Dogma. This does not mean a history that contains nothing but what is temporary and has no influence on the future ; that would not be a history of *Dogma*, a historical appreciation of the ever-valid truth of salvation based upon the revelation of God. It does mean a history that really contains temporary elements, otherwise it would be no *history* of Dogma. A system of Dogmatics fulfils its purpose if it helps its own age to appreciate the eternal Gospel. This must show itself in its content and form. Its office is to set forth what we of to-day can and should believe, and how we can and should believe it, not what we must constrain ourselves to believe of the faith of our fathers. Only this view of Dogmatics is not forced upon us by the exigencies of the age. *It is a manifest consequence of the faith* that the saving truth of Christianity is for all ages. A system of Dogmatics fully worked out cannot be for all ages, while on the other hand a system of Dogmatics which surrenders the Gospel is no exposition of the Christian Faith. It is, as we shall see, a direct consequence of the nature of faith that there is no contradiction in what we are saying ; this could not be the case if faith were a matter of knowledge, like mathematics for example. The religious relation is founded on truth ; but the conceptions formed with regard to this experience which is in itself so certain, are varying. This would be a con-

tradiction, only if there were no other species of certainty than that furnished by science. Of course all this must be proved from the nature of religion and knowledge. But with this proviso, we must insist at this early stage that it is a duty imposed by faith itself fully and freely to recognize the truth of which we speak that there is no definitive Dogmatics. Here where we are dealing with the most sacred convictions, a false conservativism without any real foundation has an even more pernicious effect than in any other sphere, when the one generation fails to understand and refuses to consider the new problems of the next. It is intelligible, but deplorable, when it happens, as it not infrequently does even yet, that a profound personal experience leads at once to an untested assumption of an antiquated theology. Real faith in the eternal Gospel is capable of educating us to do without an infallible system of Dogmatics, and it is its duty to do so. This conviction is gaining ground in principle among all parties. "We cannot take over any form of Christian theory from previous periods without strict examination" (Hunzinger). The reasons for this decisive conviction will often engage our attention. The course of history brings into prominence now this and now that aspect of human nature; i.e., in the present connection, the sensuous, the intellectual, the esthetic, the legal and ethical, and the mystical elements in the nature of religion. This happens too in combinations which are always new and peculiar, just as may be expected in history. Great thinkers have attempted to recognize all the elements in their own dogmatic system, and to connect them in one whole, Origen being perhaps the most conspicuous in this regard. But even he could do so only for his own age, and in his own distinctive manner. The Gospel, interacting with the general mental attainments

of any period, shapes a form of Dogmatics which is suited for that period; and for each new period it shapes a new form. In past history, the Dogmatic system, itself variable while founded on the permanent Gospel, has always been effective in proportion to the vigour with which it has been able to set forth the work of Jesus. Even in the disputes of the present, which are so exceptionally confused, the disputants of most diverse type, who appear to have nothing else in common, stand still in His presence; and even the discussion of the hour, whether this Jesus ever lived, hardly touches the deepest roots of immediate feeling.

Why should not this recognition of the mutability of Dogmatics and of the permanence of the Gospel be accepted as a basis by the party,—or rather, why should not the latter thus become more consciously active, for it never dies out completely—the party which is almost more indispensable in religion than it is in politics, the party which is no distinct party and for that reason allows all parties to hold fast their truth—nay, first makes them fruitful—"The Party of Honest People" (Moltke)? The conditions, it might be thought, are to hand in our day in rich measure. We opposed with the utmost candour a dangerous optimism which overvalues the religiosity or even the Christianity of present-day life. We may now point out how this modern world is steeped in religious aspirations and yearnings, but how ineffective are its attempts at actual reconstruction. On the other hand, wherever there is power and truth, it is Christianity which shows them, with the extraordinary adaptability which it has already proved in history at more than one crisis that threatened to be its end. Once more the protecting walls on which the vine reared itself are falling, and "noble tendrils stray unsupported upon the ground" (Naumann). What are the ideas of a

new age with which the eternal Gospel will ally itself? What belongs to this Gospel itself, and what is perhaps only a temporary garment for it? Wherefore and how far is Jesus its centre, and again coming to be acknowledged as such? To explain all this is itself the most important task of any system of Dogmatics, that aims at serving its generation. We say absolutely nothing of how all the separate questions may be answered later on. But a theology, and especially a system of Dogmatics, which does not, as a matter of principle, raise these questions is worthless for our day. Or to give the matter a personal turn, the present day can be influenced only by a theologian who in his own religious life has felt as a temptation, and has overcome, the power of the Modern Consciousness. This means, however, that so far as it contains truth, he must have experienced it as a confirming, deepening and enriching influence. To be sure, we cannot forget here the saying of Schleiermacher that "one age bears the guilt of another, but can seldom expiate it except by incurring fresh guilt". However, we shall impose a smaller amount of fresh guilt on our successors, the more truly we realize the danger in question.

From the nature of the case it is impossible to describe *in advance*, even to give in outline, the *form which that system of doctrine will take*, which is to correspond as closely as possible to the needs of our age, not by giving up some portion of the Gospel, but by expressing and establishing for us of to-day that Gospel, which is really eternal and in itself well defined. However, in one respect at least, the main tendency of the following exposition as a whole can be indicated somewhat more definitely; viz. in relation to those who are vividly impressed by the crying needs of the Evangelical Churches at present, and go farther to meet the claims of the

modern consciousness than they are permitted to do by their own intention to present the old Gospel afresh, as one which is eternal—an intention which is without doubt a praiseworthy one. Absorbed by the recent advances in the knowledge of nature, of history, and of our own being, they would speak of a "new theology," which they contrast as the "theology of consciousness" with the "old," which is the "theology of facts". They say that in strictness we must not speak of a commonly accepted theory of the universe, or endeavour to attain a theory of the kind; that we must and can be satisfied with "the historical evidences in favour of the ideality of the human spirit," with "pulsations of the soul," which we "can conceive, if we first look to ourselves, as they appear in the vibration and music found in the heart of God Himself". "God-consciousness is the form in which we possess God," the "highest natural idea of reason," which emerges in history, is developed, and has reached "its climax in Jesus, so far as history has yet gone" (K. Sell). It is just from a full appreciation of the motives that give rise to such statements, that we discover the reason for rejecting them. Such persons desire to secure for the Gospel citizenship in our modern consciousness; faith in it is not intended to be in any way a burden, a compulsory belief, but a free venture prompted by the deepest necessities of our spirit. Certainly this is a bold and a noble undertaking, and to a great extent it is just what was described above as the ideal. Yet in the precise form described it is really unattainable; and if it were attainable, it is not the highest ideal, because it does not correspond exactly to the facts. For if one enters fully into the nature of faith, there can be no doubt that "the possession of God in the form of God-consciousness," as they put it, is much too vague a phrase, one which does not thoroughly

represent the matter of experience. Of course in the traditional conception, the rights of subjective experience have been prejudiced, and objective teaching has been overrated and clothed with external authority; or at least the subjective element was not carefully enough investigated, and recognized in its real importance. Yet an analysis of the religious process will teach us this: however indubitable it is that the process in question can be real for us only in our consciousness, it is certain that it is not merely a process in our consciousness; or, if one were to reply that this is not denied by any person, the decisive question is this—*By what reasons can we be convinced* that it is not merely such a process, but that the Power which we mean when we speak of God, *the Power which transcends our consciousness and is independent of it, really manifests itself in it?* And for this purpose, the pious person who tries to obtain a full conception of his experience, finds, as we shall be able to convince ourselves, that it is not enough to bring forward the idea of God as the "highest natural idea of reason"; for this purpose there is requisite, as all religions assert, an actual self-manifestation of the Deity, a Revelation of God not in our consciousness merely. But if it should be objected to this that, with the assertion now made, we are really setting up an authority which is alien to our spirit, one would be forgetting that in the process itself, exactly conceived, there are effective counteracting elements plainly to be discovered which obviate any such danger. All external constraint is excluded, if the inmost nature of piety is recognized, viz., actual personal devotion to the actual personal God, man's "I will" as the answer to the Divine appeal, "Wilt thou?" Then, too, in the exposition which follows, we discover something else which is of importance. Faith in this well-defined and

special Revelation of what is independent of our consciousness, but can with equal certainty be experienced by our consciousness, and only in it,—that faith, given as it is in the nature of religion, we shall at the same time get to understand as by no means an arbitrary limitation of our knowledge, but as the correlative which answers to the real nature of it, as the completion of our human nature as a whole, and not as it is contracted in deference to some theory. This whole presentation of the matter will be more convincing when, in the course of our exposition, the definite content of the Christian faith can be put in place of those general terms which were provisionally necessary,—the terms religion or piety, and actual self-manifestation of God, or revelation. God as holy, redeeming love is not clear to us, and still less certain, solely because of the experiential value of this conception, and because it is anchored in the depths of our consciousness as the chief idea of reason; but rather through the actual approach of God in the same real world which is also full of realities that occasion doubt, an approach which we would certainly never be able to recognize as real, unless it approved itself as the fulfilment of our highest destiny; while our destiny again would never be either perfectly conceived or effectively fulfilled, except through the real approach of God now alluded to.

It is only another expression for the same thing, contemplating a special aspect of the matter, when our essay in the field of Dogmatics, as prosecuted in the following pages, is described as a *System of Doctrine setting forth the Revealed Mystery;* or as the Preface itself put it, the one Revealed Mystery regarded as a unity. The Dogmatics of the Roman Church, even where it attempts in a logical construction to reach a harmony of results so sublime in its kind as that which

we have in the *Summa* of Aquinas, knows of an abundance of mysteries, and authoritatively demands submissive recognition of them. In contra-distinction to this, the endeavours or promises of a theology of pure consciousness are not only intelligible, but in a large measure justified,—as we have seen and will yet see. But however much is said in the latter about the mystery of religion, often in impressive terms, they fail to acknowledge the whole depth of that mystery. On account of this depth by which it is characterized, it is for us in the last resort impenetrable and therefore valueless mystery; or else it is by God's grace mystery which has been revealed, but revealed in such a manner that, in virtue of its own nature, it always continues to be mystery still. On this view, we do not come back in any way to the numerous mysteries which it was held that we ought to believe. Rather with thankful faith we lay hold of the one mystery which appears as a unity, viz. God, and this we do through the Revelation which He has given; and from this faith there springs the perception which is always gained afresh of His inexhaustible perfection. This matter we shall have to recall and to explain in all the particular articles of doctrine. Every age will do so in a new fashion; both by entering more deeply into the substance of the mystery, and by searching out the relation between faith and knowledge in ways which are always new, and which also correspond to the varying needs of each period. But the history of the Gospel, as God has guided it, ought to have led us to this conclusion, that the conception of a system of doctrine as a progressive apprehension of the Gospel of God's revealed mystery, should no longer be lost to us. Such an apprehension was plainly asserted even in the earliest formative period of our religion, and was what the circumstances of the time required, as

we see from a merely cursory glance at the words mystery and revelation in the New Testament.

This brief statement which we were able to make in advance with reference to the nature of the exposition which follows, was ultimately due to a decisive impression which has tacitly guided us in this Introduction as a whole. This is the conviction that in a work on Dogmatics, we have to make it our aim, from the first page to the last, clearly and with all seriousness to exhibit faith in God, as Christianity regards it, in its character as real faith, as real trust in a real, living God. One may say this requirement is self-evident; and it was expressly pointed out above that any hastily formed estimate of the amount of faith or of unbelief in any period is absurd. But in all cases, what has been of value for the real furtherance of faith in a period was only those expositions which represented it as requiring invariably from its own nature, to be appropriated in a personal manner, and to be gained by fresh conflicts. Every statement is worthless which does not in some way testify to this.

THE PRINCIPLE ACCORDING TO WHICH WE DIVIDE what follows, is the direct outcome of the foregoing discussion. If the science of the Christian Faith at its very start labours under the reproach mentioned above, that the idea of it involves a hopeless contradiction, we must meet this objection by a discussion of fundamental principles. In other words, *Apologetics* is necessary. No exposition of our faith, however admirable, can take the place of the establishment of its truth, and just as little can the exposition of the Christian life dispense with such. Neither Dogmatics nor Ethics can do without Apologetics. Obviously there exists the closest connexion, reciprocal action indeed, between the exposition and the proof; for we cannot have a relevant

demonstration of the truth, without accurate knowledge of the nature, and the latter again cannot be fully understood without the former. But this does not affect our claim; it merely points to a formal difficulty encountered and overcome in other sciences as well. There is no circle in the proof; we only have it in the exposition. But there does certainly come to be self-deception in every instance, if it is supposed that we can dispense with Apologetics. We are acting in that case as if we had to do with believers merely, or with such as are prepared to believe; whereas every thought directed to real life convinces us of the opposite. Undoubtedly there is no greater task for systematic theology than that of showing "in what way God makes Himself knowable through His work as it affects us" (Schlatter). It is precisely this and nothing else that is the aim of our Apologetics. But Apologetics there must be, because we cannot make this work of God clear without dealing with the peculiarity of religious knowledge: as a matter of fact that work is by no means acknowledged by all and sundry.

A subordinate question is—*What form* should the necessary Apologetics take? Manifestly it is most desirable to work it out for oneself, and to appeal to it in Dogmatics and Ethics. This may be done from very different points of view; e.g. Frank appeals to his System of Christian Certainty, J. Kaftan to his works on the Nature and Truth of Religion, Kähler to the first part of his Christian Doctrine, Pfleiderer to his Philosophy of Religion. Those who are not in a position to refer to such a special Apologetics, preliminary to Dogmatics and Ethics, will prefer to divide their apologetic material between them, discussing in each the apologetic problems which are most germane to the matter in hand. This discussion must not be too brief,

and so it should take the form not merely of an Introduction, as e.g. with Wendt, but of an Exposition with a place to itself. So Biedermann in the statement of Principles in his Dogmatics, and Dorner in his Pisteology. Thus we get *two main divisions*, *the proof* and *the detailed statement* of the Christian Faith. The content of our *first division* is determined by what we have already seen of its purpose. It deals with *the nature* and then with *the truth* of the Christian religion. As the outcome of our discussion of these two subjects we arrive at a clearer understanding of *the nature of religious knowledge*, and *of the science of the Christian Faith*, which forms the point of transition to our second main division, Dogmatics proper. But inasmuch as the Christian Faith claims to rest upon the revelation of God in Christ, to be based upon it and determined by it, and the proof of its truth is therefore the proof of this revelation, in order to bring out more clearly the point of view which is fundamental to the whole of the first main division, we give it the sub-title of *The Revelation of God in Christ as norm* (*standard*) *and ground of the truth of Christian faith.* What further is needed for the elucidation of these conceptions, may be said later on, more briefly and more convincingly than in this place.

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND ITS ANTAGONISTS

The Revelation of God in Christ as the Standard and Basis of Christian Religious Truth

THE NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

In order to determine the *truth* of the Christian religion, we must understand its *nature* (p. 28 ff.). Only thus are we guarded against a danger from which the most recent Philosophy of Religion often suffers: as we are thinking of the possibility of a proof, we might give out something as religion, which cannot strictly speaking be so regarded, but is only a shadow of real religion, e.g. esthetic and mystical feeling. But if we have strictly understood the nature of the Christian religion, then either an adequate proof for it will have to be found, or else we must give up that religion. Only we will not imagine that we have established its truth, if we have, or think we have, established something which is not that religion at all. The statement we now make holds good, moreover, as against many desires which are expressed in the name of a faith which is of peculiar vitality. How often have people troubled themselves in vain about a proof of the legitimacy of Christian petitionary prayer, because of the failure to distinguish it both from the impious desire to constrain God, and from mere resignation! Then lastly, by setting its nature in the foreground, the objection is met that a proof of its truth, preceding Dogmatics, especially as regards Revelation, turns Christianity into a religion of reason, aims necessarily at a proof contrary to its nature. For it is just the apprehension of its nature which will show whether a proof, or what kind of proof, is requisite. We

have already directed the reader's attention to the interaction which is necessarily implied in these circumstances between Apologetics and Dogmatics. But the nature of the Christian religion cannot be accurately known, unless we understand the nature of religion in general. Our first topic therefore is

THE NATURE OF RELIGION

As a guiding principle, we may take the word of warning, "There is perhaps more artificiality about religion when it is made the object of thought, than there is about it as experienced". In fact, the danger of scholasticism—elaboration of ideas which are not always checked afresh by reference to experience—is specially great in our province. Now we have a first attempt of an imposing description in Calvin's *Institutio*, in what he sets forth regarding man's knowledge of God and his knowledge of himself, and the way in which both are one at the root: a glance into our hearts to see what we have and what is wanting in us, ends in an upward glance to God, the source of all good; and conversely it is only a knowledge of God that makes one's knowledge of self true, and puts an end to one's self-conceit. So with Zwingli, and with Luther too in his way; all of them being stimulated by Augustine's ideas, while infusing into them the new spirit of the Reformation. But the reader who honestly grapples with the subject has the conviction forced upon him that we of to-day cannot proceed exactly in that fashion. The inner construction, so to say, of our thought about these things has become different. Not as if we desired to divert our minds, or could divert them, from the impressive seriousness of the presentation of the matter which has been referred to; but for us it is no longer possible to regard such a personal apprehension and an objective

inquiry as forming a direct unity: that would awaken the feeling that we were doing violence to the facts. The same thing which, when stated in proper circumstances, cannot fail to produce an impression on us as on others, except when we would have to admit that our wish is to evade its influence, readily appears to us, when pressed on our notice without explanation in a scientific inquiry, as only an attempt to escape from a difficulty. The principal reason for this is the circumstance that the exact distinction between our mental faculties, the intellectual and the practical, was not well known in that former age; and then we have the prevalent conviction that truth, even of the most objective kind, must be set forth in its subjective reality. It is involved in each of these considerations that we have to distinguish exposition and proof with clearer consciousness; and in our case this means the Nature and the Truth of religion. Certainly we are now in danger of losing an advantage which those of old possessed, that concentrated power which signalizes, e.g. the Introitus of Calvin. Yet though aware of this danger, we are no longer able to follow the path adopted by those of old, but must choose one for ourselves. And at the end of this path, it will become obvious that the spirit which once prompted Calvin to write as he did on the Nature of Religion, may and ought to be still our own.

It is not the case, though it is often asserted, that the reality of God, and our obligation as towards God, are for us matters of less serious consequence, when we seek to penetrate deeply into the nature of religion, in the way which our faculty of knowledge marks out for us. Hence we cannot accept the watchword lately given forth with much emphasis, that the whole of our theology, not merely the liberal type but indeed the whole that has succeeded Schleiermacher, down to the ranks of the

"most Positive" school, requires to turn away from the anthropocentric to the theocentric standpoint (Schaeder). For such a theology itself cannot set aside the confirmation which we have in the form of our own experience. That we are not concerned in such case with our subjective experience as an isolated fact, but rather with a real experience of the reality of God,—this is quite understood as a matter of course. But this truth, which is indeed inalienable, is not guaranteed by the fact that one gives the assurance that faith is a "notorious experience of the self-manifestation of God," unless it is shown in what way we can conceive and understand that self-manifestation of God as such. Now for this purpose an investigation of the nature of religion, one which is as simple as possible, is an indispensable presupposition. Why the objectivity of religion, and in particular the Majesty of God, should be prejudiced in that case in deference to our wishes, we fail to see. Our exposition itself may, we think, allay this two-fold apprehension, the root of which in the substance of religion we quite understand, and the expression of which we welcome with gratitude, as an utterance which requires to be borne in mind.

Here then immediately at the outset we give effect to the principle which has just been set forth. The Psychology of Religion and the History of Religion, as nowadays developed, make the idea of the furtherance of life the central one by preference, when they expound the nature of religion. As may easily be conceived, the objection we spoke of is raised to this procedure, viz. that religion is viewed in a one-sided fashion as an affair of man ; that its incomparable seriousness, that reverence before God, or the sense of obligation as towards God, is prejudiced. Certainly this is possible, but it is not inevitable. And on the score of method, the starting-

point which is objected to seems to us the more correct one. For we do not clearly include all that appears as religion in the great world of life and of history, if we begin with that sense of obligation alone, and lay hold of it at once in that strength which it undoubtedly possesses in our religion; but on the other hand, in our religion where we have reverential worship of God, this is also true life for us. Hence we do not lose sight of the seriousness of religion, when we start with the idea of the furtherance of life. Rather in this case we can emphasize the seriousness of our obligation all the more naturally; whereas if we give effect to it in the first instance, there readily comes in the appearance of exaggeration, and the undeniable truth of the idea is concealed rather than recognized.

If we desire to understand the nature of religion, presupposing what has been said, we need not trouble ourselves with a consideration of the mere fancies of self-satisfied dilettanti, who have for some time made obtrusive pronouncements, asserting their views much more loudly than there was any occasion for. Simply as a specimen this dictum may be mentioned here—"Let us call religion the totality of our higher interests, the link that binds the soul to itself, to other souls and to God, the manifestation of goodwill, love and knowledge, and the striving after perfection" (E. Reich). Still more modestly a Willy Wels proclaimed as his specialty a new system of religion, the nature of which "is not the union of two entities for the purpose of combating a third, but the union of two with a view to their reconciliation with each other". As we turn now to the serious inquiry, we may at the outset recall the fact that the nature of religion is not to be gathered from investigations of the word *religion*. More value attaches to the obvious sense of the terms current in every-

day speech, "Fellowship," "Intercourse," "Communion with God"; "Life in God"; "Leaving one's self in God's hands, and letting God live in one"; or "Knowledge of God," "Fear of God," "Love of God," "Blessedness". None of these is without value. The latter, especially those which are the simplest, point to some one important aspect of religion, but just on that account furnish no complete general explanation. The former are of importance as short comprehensive expressions, if once they are supplemented by the rich content of careful separate investigation: "Fellowship," "Intercourse," "Communion," point indeed directly to the great fundamental mystery of all religion, and especially of Christianity—"God in us, we in God". Only they are too general to furnish a definite starting-point for investigation. But like these popular expressions, many more scientific definitions of the concept of religion do not insure clearness: for example, "God's being in us, and our being in God"; "to know one's self in God, and God in one's self"; "feeling of absolute dependence" (Schleiermacher); "freedom in God" (Hegel); "assertion of the personal self in opposition to nature" (Ritschl); "a practical living relation to God, which depends on the involuntary feeling of vital obligation to God, and by voluntary surrender to Him, raises the self to a living fellowship with God, and a god-like position in the world" (O. Pfleiderer). However much truth there may be in such definitions, they are yet at times too indefinite, at times—and this is more frequently the case—too definite to apply to all that actually presents itself as religion—think of the experiences of the mission field. This defect is, at all events, partly accounted for by the fact that they attend too little to religion as an affair of the community (objective religion) and in too one-sided a fashion merely

to the religious experience of the individual (subjective religion, religiousness). The latter is certainly the crucial matter to which we must attend; but we are not by its means securely guarded against merely casual observation without the former. Nor is our own religion alone a sufficiently broad basis of investigation. We can, it is true, come to understand other religions only by taking our own as a starting-point, but it becomes clear to us only by a comparison as comprehensive and detailed as possible with all the religions to which we have access. It has been as a direct result of the progress of the comparative history of religion that the questions arising out of Schleiermacher's investigation, which laid the foundation for subsequent study, have always been growing more and more definite, as indeed it was he who first paved the way for a historical treatment of religion by doing away with the phantasm of "Natural Religion". These questions are—What is the nature of the religious process according to its content? What according to its form, its place in the human soul? What in relation to the other processes in man's spiritual life? Finally—What is the origin of religion? This last question has often been discussed, as if it came first, and is even yet confused with that of the nature. In any case the question of the nature comes before us more directly than that of the origin; in any case the latter can be answered only on the basis of the former. This holds good equally of the origin in each individual possessed of religion, and of the first beginnings in history —a two-fold sense of the word "origin" which is responsible for much of the ambiguity. First then we discuss

The Nature of Religion According to its Content

In the religious process when investigated after the method above specified, four fundamental character-

istics show themselves. They appear both at the lowest stage of development, and at the highest, and in every sort of religion. Luther's conflict in his monk's cell exhibits them, and so does the piety of a negro tribe. First, the thought of a supernatural Power, of God (or powers, gods, as the case may be), who lays claim to the man that feels himself dependent on Him, and takes an interest in him. Secondly, a sense of a vital need, which seeks to be satisfied by means of this Power. In the third place, the feeling that it is somehow incumbent to do homage thereto by worship and trust, and a readiness of the will to fulfil this obligation. Lastly the assurance of some sort of manifestation, or revelation of the Godhead. Clearly the first three characteristics go together. They constitute in the strict sense the content of the religious process, while the fourth gives expression to the fact that for the religious consciousness, it is an actuality, distinguished from mere imagination by being a revelation of God. Whether this conviction is well grounded or not, does not at all come into consideration here. It is the centre from which the circle of the religious life is described round those three points. The three first-named characteristics have reference to the interchange of relations between God and man; in the fourth, Revelation, lies the specially express recognition that man is indebted therefor to God.

By distinguishing and combining these fundamental characteristics, here at the very outset we get a clear idea of the essential fact that religion really is nothing less than fellowship, intercourse, communion between God and man; a drawing near on the part of God to man, and on the part of man to God; God's being in man, and man's being in God; but of such a nature that this fellowship depends upon God for its basis,

progress and completion, that God has the first and last word, however important man's response may also be. The idea which has been last expressed we specially emphasize at this point, in order that the objection discussed at the commencement, the demand for a truly "theocentric theology," may not prevent a careful estimate of such considerations as are set forth in what follows, and are indispensable. We shall often have to revert to this matter, and shall do so definitively when dealing with the Origin of Religion.

This would of course be all wrong, if certain philosophers were right, who quite recently, like Natorp and Höffding, have constructed a religion without God; having as its special source the feeling behind knowledge, will and imagination and purely subjective. In so doing they have received in some measure the approval of many historians of religion. The "infinity of feeling," it is held, must not be confused with the "feeling for the Infinite": the former must stand, the latter must cease. Only this theory applies not to what mankind have hitherto called religion, but to what in the opinion of such philosophers must take its place, seeing that at the stage of civilization reached by almost all people, it has reached its end. In reality, however, religion is not a discussion which man holds with himself, but with God; it is the "longing for a reality on which we can know that we are entirely dependent, as soon as we become aware of it" (W. Herrmann). Wundt also has expressly stated this in his own way, though he substantially shares the belief that religion has been transformed into morality.

Now is the time to emphasize some specially important aspects of the above-named characteristics, which while we are considering religion in general help us to a better understanding of our own. In this con-

nexion we must always emphasize the immense difference between these characteristics in the different religions, as also the sameness in spite of the difference, which it is that justifies our speaking of them as fundamental characteristics.

First The Idea of God. We merely observe in passing, how honour is paid here to *many* gods, either an unlimited number, or a limited circle; there to *one God*, at times to one only to the strict exclusion of all others, at other times to one, whose relation to the many is undefined. It is more necessary to emphasize the infinite variety of senses given to the expression "Supernatural Power" in different instances. The word "supernatural" is always differently understood according as the natural world is thought of, whether as small, or great, or infinite; and also according as it is viewed as a world which is determined only in the natural relations or in the moral as well. But in every religion, the god of the worshipper is distinguished from his world and thought of as exalted above it, however little exalted this exaltation may appear to another, and however indefinite the distinction. This holds good equally of the fetish-worshipper, and the modern man: the one would not yet have religion, the other would have it no longer, were his god not exalted above his world. The most recent discussions especially show that there is reason for insisting on the latter point. The dread lest they should describe the delicate subject religion in too precise terms, has induced many to use only the negative expression "non-world," rather than the word God. But then the way in which they speak of this testifies plainly to the correctness of our statement: much commotion of mind is often betrayed by their halting speech.

Equally different are the conceptions entertained re-

garding the claim which God has upon the worshipper, and God's interest in the worshipper. Between the Heavenly Father who makes us His children in Christ, and the demon whose evil eye it is well to avert, there is a whole world containing all conceivable gradations, and it need not be said that these two extreme ideas appear to us as far apart as the poles; but yet in both cases it is presupposed that the god who is believed in, at all events under certain circumstances, has an interest in man. It is likewise difficult for us as Christians to speak of our reverent awe and trust in the same breath with the shivering terror of a Shaman; still the two have this in common that the Supernatural Power lays claim to man, and expects of him a certain behaviour. This circumstance has an important consequence for the form of the idea of God. Namely, God is always regarded AS PERSONAL—feeling, knowing, willing; otherwise surely it would be absurd for man to make any appeal to Him (cf. 1 Kings XVIII. 26 ff.; Psalm CXV. 1 ff.), "as if in Heaven there were an ear to hear". A religion, in which God is thought of as quite impersonal, is a self-contradiction, although under a complicated civilization it may often be just upon the personality of God that doubt is cast, and for a time it may appear as if there might be a religious relation to a god identical with the world. The question whether in the plain sense of the term prayer can be offered to such a god is the quickest way to destroy this illusion. Such an idea of God has its home not in religion, but in philosophy. Properly, however, we should speak not of God, but of the Infinite, the World-ground, the World-unity and the like. It is an intellectually based, often an esthetically embellished idea of God. Only it conduces to perspicuity to recollect here how little significance attaches to ambiguous names. Often,

e.g. the word Pantheism is used, when one would simply wish to maintain the living presence of God in the world, His immanence ; or the word Theism is opposed, when one wants to reject spiritless types of anthropomorphism. The Pantheism which we oppose here is such an identification of God with the world as implies that man is viewed as entirely passive, in presence of the Divine nature which darkly strains forward in the process of its evolution, so that nothing but submergence in this Absolute is possible. And the Theism which we assert is nothing else than the intellectual treatment of religious experience, by which it is objectified in its full significance as described above. "We cannot worship what only attains to consciousness in us" (Otto). In the Doctrine of God's Personality and Eternity, it will have to be shown in how far this Theism cannot be proved, but can be established, and why this "objectifying" is not a mere subjective phantasmagoria of our own, but is an interpretation of the fact of God's condescending approach.

A self-evident but important inference from all this is that every religious person has the greatest conceivable interest in the *truth* of his idea of God. To be sure, here again the greatest differences show themselves in reference to the clearness, the consistency and indeed also the measure of men's assurance. The clear confidence of the Christian which fills and sustains the whole life has little affinity with the confusion, haphazard and uncertainty of the superstitious negro. But common to both is the circumstance that if, and in so far as, they have religion, they cannot forego the claim that the god to whom they make appeal actually exists. Yes and No is a poor theology, because religion lives by its assurance of the existence of God, and endures no Yes and No: this god is certainly no matter of indifference to us, but

the supernatural Power that has an interest in us and makes claims upon us. "Our weal and woe are at stake" (J. Kaftan). This interest in the truth explains the holy enthusiasm of all genuine believers—their glowing zeal to win others for their own faith—as also the terrible fanaticism associated with religion, where this is not excluded by the nature and content of the faith. This important truth, long misunderstood, has received more general recognition through the modern Psychology of Religion; e.g. H. Maier expresses the matter which has just been stated in the words of J. Kaftan, by saying that our conceptions of value in Religion are shaped by the "affective imagination," not by the "cognitive". No doubt there is always the danger there, that this modern Psychology should suppose that by its own resources it can decide as to the truth of the conceptions in which faith is embodied, and so, if we may use the language just quoted, can put the "cognitive imagination" above the "affective". This matter must be considered later, when we have to discuss the significance of the Psychology of Religion as a whole; and the principle is examined when we are dealing with the relation between faith and knowledge.

The allusion to the imagination leads us here to specify another important peculiarity of the guiding idea. This quite inalienable interest in the truth has reference properly speaking only to the specific *nature* of each religion, not to every possible expression which this nature finds. The garb of religious truth is always woven with the help of the imagination; even what is not of this world must be expressed in the language of this world. This *symbolical* character of religious ideas, in particular their anthropomorphic character, will often occupy us again. Now it is quite a matter of indifference if these expressions change and are being con-

tinually recast, in harmony with the general spiritual development; so long always as the living roots of the religion concerned are not injured. But when this happens, its death-knell has rung. Many a lofty temple has been closed, because the onward march of culture destroyed not only the trappings, but the idol, and along with the idol, the life of the god, no longer suffering him to live as a reality in the faith of his worshippers. Thus arises one of the most difficult problems in the history of the race, as also in the life-history of each individual human being, who has power to make himself the object of his own thought. In this place we can only raise the question, "Will the Christian Faith share that same fate?" It has survived the overthrow of the Ptolemaic system of astronomy; but will not its end be brought about by the Copernican, when once it is universally understood in all its consequences, as is very frequently maintained? This Christian Faith has on the whole shown enormous adaptability; but will there be no limit thereto? "Father in Heaven" is certainly a metaphorical expression like the others: will it prove itself the reality which cannot be dissolved by any advance in the knowledge of the world, because in its true and deepest sense it has its roots not in the knowledge of the world, but in the self-revelation of the God in question? The Christian Faith is that every wound, every shock in such a struggle for God, and every apparent defeat only leads to new victories, new disclosures of His unsearchable riches. Since we have had at last to use the word "revelation," we are referred onwards to this fundamental characteristic of all religion, the significance of which was already mentioned at the outset, and has to be worked out in detail later on. Here our purpose was simply to emphasize the importance for the believer of the truth of his conception of God,

since he regards himself as possessing it through revelation.

Our next task, however, is to treat of the second fundamental characteristic of the religious process, the EXPERIENCING OF A VITAL NECESSITY. This is variously expressed, but the fact is always the same and unambiguous. There is a feeling of insufficiency, and a wish to get quit of it, the feeling of a limitation and the desire to overcome it; the contradiction between the claim to life present to self-consciousness and the life actually present, and the longing to remove this contradiction; the want of what is good, and the longing for such good. Here again, there is *the greatest diversity* in the nature of the good things missed and pursued. There may be many such, material or ethical, both in the lowest and in the highest degree; there may be one only which again may be either ethical or natural. With this there is connected another distinction, without the two coinciding: the supernatural power may be sought rather as merely giver of the good pursued, or as good and giver in one. This latter is by no means confined, as we are apt to think, to the highest stages of religion. No: even Baal and Astarte grant participation in the life which, in the opinion of their worshippers, they themselves live. What a contrast to the Old Testament, "My joy is to draw near to God"; "If only I have Thee, I care naught for heaven or earth" (Ps. LXXIII.)! But a common element is an impelling desire for joy, satisfaction, life, and the appeasing of this hunger by, yea in, God. Every religious act, be it ever so dark and confused, has within itself something of this yearning to enter into fellowship with the gods or God, and not to use them simply as a means towards the acquisition of any sort of good: we recall the first fundamental characteristic of which we spoke, the groping after an exalted Power,

which interests itself in, and lays claim to, us; and the third which will be treated immediately. Note further that there is a natural correspondence between this variety in the good things pursued, and in the manner of pursuit, and the various conceptions entertained regarding God: as is the idea held of the good thing or things, so is that of the God or gods. And here again the most important distinction consists in the more or less pronounced recognition of moral benefits and of gods possessed of moral attributes. The further characterization of the third fundamental characteristic is also closely connected therewith. In passing to the third, we want to make it specially plain that these fundamental characteristics are inseparable from each other. As regards that of homage, the truth in question is expressed by the word God itself, if we assume that it denotes "the Being who is supplicated," or "the Being to whom sacrifice is offered".

Man's HOMAGE in the presence of the god, who takes some sort of interest in him and lays some sort of claim to him, realizes itself first in the emotional and volitional impulses towards worship and trust, as well as towards obedience based thereon, which correspond to that presupposition; and then shows itself in all sorts of actions (Prayer and Sacrifice). The name "worship" is generally applied only to the latter, but their hidden roots in the heart are quite as important for the understanding of religion. The *most obvious distinction* between the stages of this worship, which again are innumerable, has reference to whether the homage offered God is thought to dispose Him favourably towards man's desires, indeed actually to change His attitude, as by an action necessary for Himself, or is merely the condition, under which God, in accordance with the nature of religious fellowship, can grant the believer the blessings desired by

him. Thus in Evangelical Christianity, faith or trust is the sole service of God (Apology, 3, 34); we do not make God to be gracious to us; and our faith is no merit, but the word "demands merely believing hearts" (Luther), the fellowship of God and man can become an actuality only upon condition of trust on man's part. In conformity with this fundamental distinction, all the conceptions above mentioned mean something different in every religion, and stand in a different relation to each other: Reverence, Humility, Trust, Resignation, Submission, Obedience. Something else is here involved: the feeling of obligation to homage in the presence of the Godhead exhibits very varied degrees of personal earnestness, but it is never wholly wanting; and it is one of the most important facts in reference to religion that it cannot be created certainly, but it may be repressed by want of inclination therefor. Without some trace of the feeling of obligation as towards the supernatural Power, and the recognition of the implied duty, we can nowhere find real religion. In our religion this feeling, which we have to acknowledge with the full power of the will, is so surely the vital matter, that in view of it, Luther as well as Calvin can with good right make the idea of our blessedness in God fall completely into the background; however true it is that they cannot set aside that idea, and have no wish to do so. Here we have the legitimate core of the opposition to that conception of religion as signifying the furtherance of life, which we mentioned at the outset. Of course without effort made for the furtherance of life there is no real religion. Even a Calvin speaks quite frankly of the circumstance that "men could never devote themselves to God entirely and with the heart, unless they saw that their own supreme happiness was firmly grounded in Him"; for in what other way except

in the form of purposes needing to be fulfilled, can we conceive the spiritual life of man in its living reality? However, this effort to secure the furtherance of life has a religious significance, only when it is subordinated to the feeling of obligation as towards the supernatural Power that gives life, towards God, however obscure that feeling may be; and when there is a recognition of that obligation by the will. To the consciousness of the man of faith, reverence before God is certainly in countless instances only a means in the first place for the purpose of the furtherance of life; but the sense of obligation, however obscure it may be, is never really wanting in any religious act. In the last resort, the furtherance of life is the subject-matter dealt with, as homage is shown in presence of God, being Divinely intended means for the manifestation of homage; but contrariwise homage is not means for the furtherance of life. In our religion we experience our true life when we have perfect trust in God, for the reason that God is love; but this trust is entirely one with a fear of God which is never so profound under other circumstances, a reverential obedience which is unmatched; in fact it is just in this homage that we find blessedness for our souls: to the "Father" we say, with a devotion which is never attained in other circumstances, "Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever".

In reference to the fourth fundamental characteristic, belief in a REVELATION, it is specially necessary to remember that here again we are speaking not of the truth of religion, and so neither of the legitimacy, nor the reverse, of this belief, but simply of the fact, that such a belief undeniably is of the essence of religion precisely determined. It is the conviction that God has shown His activity in some sort of way. Just that is regarded as revelation which calls forth in man the

impression that God manifests His activity for his weal or woe. There is a natural correspondence between the nature of this revelation, and the ideas entertained of God, of the good bestowed or refused by Him and the homage due to Him; for the God who manifests Himself as active, shows who He is, what He gives and how He desires to be honoured. Only it must be realized that this will be the case in proportion as the revelation affirmed is clear and effectual; the less this is so, the more will the desire of the worshipper mould God upon itself; in conformity with this desire the form of the homage will assume definite shape, while the idea of the revelation will be shaped by them all. But unless there is present *in some form* the conviction of God's manifestation of Himself as active, of a revelation of Him on the basis of some sort of experience, then there is no real religion. In every religion, therefore, the proper function of "revelation" is that it proves the reality of the religion in question for the consciousness of its adherents. We must not let ourselves be blinded as to this simple state of matters by traditions which in the sphere of a definite religion it is almost impossible to eradicate; as among ourselves, by the after effects of the opinion of our old Protestant theologians that revelation is essentially the impartation of supernatural knowledge, infallible doctrines concerning God, though certainly in the perfectly spiritual religion knowledge has high significance, and in it God cannot interest Himself for our salvation without also working in us a knowledge of the truth, as we may realize by remembering the testimony of Jesus. But it is also a displacement of the idea of revelation, though of quite another kind, if revelation be taken to mean essentially merely everything that is original and touched with genius in the sphere of religion (Schleiermacher).

The importance which the idea has in all religions is thereby obscured, seeing that only the higher religions are thought of; while the specific character of revelation is easily lost sight of: for certainly in the concept of revelation in religion the stress is not on the circumstance that something is great and new in the life of the human spirit as such, but that God makes Himself known, manifests Himself as real. The believer has quite a different sort of earnestness about the reality of God from that of the artist, for example, or the hero of science in their "revelations".

Though every religion claims to rest upon revelation, greatly as they vary in the stress laid upon this claim, yet very different ideas are held as to *the manner* of revelation, and this very fact affords a ground for these variations in stress. The chief difference is whether the manifestation of God is seen essentially in external facts whether of nature or of history, which (primarily the latter but under certain circumstances also the former) continue their influence by means of tradition, or on the other hand in inner experiences. The latter is often called mystical, the former historical, or mythical, revelation. But the inward by no means excludes the outward. The assertion that because God reveals Himself inwardly, He cannot reveal Himself in history, gives evidence of a very superficial view of the matter. The great question in general, and for Christianity in particular, is rather that of the relation of the inward to the historical, whether the historical can lay claim to abiding significance, or must retire in favour of the inward; in which latter case, revelation is in the last resort nothing other than the deepest objective ground of subjective religious experience.

From the foregoing, it is manifest how ambiguous the conceptions "general and special," "immediate and

mediate," "natural and supernatural" are, as applied to revelation. The last distinction in any case, has reference much more to its truth than to its nature, for every revelation in itself claims to be supernatural: what is expressly so called claims therefore to embody a higher degree of certainty. But the same confusion of the question of nature and truth often enters into the other terms as well. Indeed some of them are actually used in quite opposite senses, since for example "immediate" is applied by many to the inward, while it is to the historical that others apply it.

In view of the questions which arise later in the special department of Christian Dogmatics, we may here in concluding at least refer to the fact that the desire for religious certainty, which finds its clearest expression in the belief in revelation, does not exclude but involves difficulty in the attainment of this certainty. Mystery and revelation are the two poles of every living religious movement; without "the Hidden God" "He that revealeth Himself" is not "God". Especially in our religion of divine sonship, it is only in conjunction with the most reverential reserve that the most intimate fellowship is real and sincere.

From this explanation of the most important aspects of religion, in reference to its content, the inner relation of which will occupy us more particularly when we speak of its origin, we see clearly how far each of the definitions rejected at the start is correct, without our repeating them, and insisting at this time upon their partial truth. The same holds good of all the countless judgments of profound souls of all times and peoples, regarding the nature of religion. They have in it always seen "the Sunday of their lives" (Hegel). It is indeed "the soul of a man's history and of the history of humanity" (Carlyle). And this it is, because it "is the

way and manner, whereby man feels himself related to the unseen world, or non-world"; in it "man is the miracle of miracles, the great unfathomable mystery". "The Eternal comes into play: the temporal becomes a means to an end: man belongs to the side of the Eternal." And "Man's need is the sign of his greatness" (Pascal). And "the pure region of our breast is haunted by an aspiration to devote ourselves voluntarily with grateful heart to a Higher Being, One who is pure, unfathomed; thus solving the mystery found in Him who is eternally nameless. We say that this is to be pious" (Goethe). As to anything in such utterances of the greatest minds that immediately approves itself as true to every one of lesser note, and as to any defect that may be found in them, in particular whether religion is not valued too much as a process in our consciousness merely,—on these matters no further discussion is required at this point. Looking back upon all the attempts to make so unfathomable an experience more intelligible to us, we simply affirm once more that there is involved communion between God and man—from God to man and from man to God—however imperfect may be the idea of this communion. We shall have to remind ourselves of this when we speak of our communion with God in Christ, which we as Christians believe cannot be surpassed: "The Father in me, I in the Father," and "We in them, they in us".

Having now made clear to ourselves the content of the religious process, we ask "In what activities of the soul has it its home?"

The Nature of Religion According to its Psychical Form

This was given above as our second fundamental question. As against the long-prevalent definition, "Religion is the knowledge and worship of God," the

statement of Schleiermacher once acted as a revelation, "Piety regarded purely in itself is a matter neither of knowledge nor of action, but a distinct kind of feeling". Schleiermacher certainly proceeds at once to further define this feeling, in a way convincing only for one who shares his view of the nature of religion according to its content (feeling of absolute dependence), as that again is dependent on his philosophical convictions, and as we saw does not completely express the reality. Our treatment of the content has already shown us that knowledge and will have far greater significance for the religious process than Schleiermacher admits: in reference to knowledge we call to mind the idea of God, and in reference to the will, what was said regarding homage; for not only in obedience but also in fear and trust, the will is active and not at all simply feeling.

But all the same it would not be correct to rest contented at this point with the indefinite statement that religion has its seat in all the psychical activities. Schleiermacher is right in the first instance, in saying that the significance of feeling must be recognized in its full scope. From the psychological point of view, every truly religious process has its starting-point and reaches its goal in feeling: the former in the feeling of a want of some sort, the latter in blessedness, however this may be more precisely defined. Moreover the idea of God, however decisive its significance may be, is not yet a constituent part of piety, unless its value be experienced in feeling. Nor lastly can homage be understood, without a stirring of feeling, whether as trust or as obeisance and obedience. But certainly it is false to isolate feeling as Schleiermacher does. In all these relations, not merely are feeling and will in general interconnected in the closest manner—the two going together in contrast with the objective consciousness,

a fact emphasized by the newer psychology—but it is the special characteristic of the religious process that those feelings collectively require recognition—personal affirmation—by the will, although in very different degrees. Even the most vivid sensation of a want, as well as of its satisfaction by the higher Power, is no religious experience, unless by an act of will we seek to overcome it, and by an act of will acknowledge the help of God as such. This special characteristic of the religious process was underestimated by Schleiermacher on account of his under-estimation of the consciousness of freedom, that is of moral responsibility. Should we wish now to express in one word this close interconnexion of will and feeling, we might speak of the "heart" as the home of religion, but for the fact that this word itself would first need more precise definition. Others, without using a definite word, are content to affirm that religion falls essentially among the practical processes of the spirit in distinction from the theoretical, and so has its place within the life of the soul in feeling and willing. But even so, we have not yet got beyond Schleiermacher, in the thorough-going manner which exact investigation requires. Not only must the inner relation of feeling and will be emphasized as has just been done, but likewise that of feeling and will to knowledge. The practical life of the spirit cannot be separated from the theoretical, as he supposes it can. The thought of God substantially determines the religious act: we have already had to demur to Schleiermacher's statement that for the pious person, it is a matter of indifference whether he thinks of God as personal or not. This matter will have to be considered further in our discussion of faith and knowledge, and also at once when we are dealing with the relation of religion to the other leading aspects of man's mental life.

The favourite expression of Holy Scripture, when it speaks of the inner process of faith, is the heart (Rom. x. 10). This word is often used to insist that religion is an affair of the whole man, of the inmost personal life. This is certainly correct. In the biblical word reference to cognition is also included, indeed it is strongly emphasized, if we recall the Hebrew usage. But the necessary explanation brings us back again to what has been already said. And from this we see at once in what sense the Psychology of Religion has good warrant for its pronouncements. But at the same time it is plain from our section relating to the content of the religious process, what danger there is in expecting from Psychology deliverances with reference to the knowledge of religion which it is unable to supply, viz. a knowledge of the special content of those processes. There is more serious risk still, if one supposes further that it is possible by means of Psychology to make out anything with regard to the truth of religion. (Cf. the school that founds on "The History of Religion," where the main tendencies of modern theology are treated.)

Now that the nature of religion has been determined, both according to its content and its psychical forms, a discussion which in some important aspects will be supplemented by what we have to say of the origin, there arises in immediate connexion with the questions already answered, our third, that regarding the

Relation of Religion to the Other Main Aspects of the Life of the Human Spirit

We are, however, to consider this question only under the points of view which are of value for our further progress, in particular for the proof of the truth of our religion. The religious activity of the spirit has to be

compared with the scientific, the esthetic and the moral, the three great branches on the tree of the higher spiritual life.

Reference may be made in a word at least to something which is almost obvious, and yet is not always sufficiently attended to in its consequences. In the activities of the spirit which we have named, it is always one of the fundamental psychical powers which is active in the first instance, as surely as in the last resort we have always to deal with processes in the soul taken as a unity ; namely in science it is cognition, in the kingdom of the beautiful it is feeling and imagination, in ethics it is the will, in religion as we saw it is feeling combined with volition in the manner indicated. In the economy of our psychic life, however, feeling and volition go together, and are distinguished from cognition, so that they are often characterized as functions of the practical psychic life in contrast with those of the theoretical. For so far as our purpose requires us to make use of the fact, it is clear that in the fundamental psychic experience of *consciousness,* the stress may be laid upon our meeting with *something* in ourselves, or upon its being *in ourselves* that we meet with something : in the former case it is what is called *theoretical,* in the latter what is called *practical* psychic life, that we have. Only in view of misconceptions which never cease to be formed, we may insist once more that it is presupposed in what we have said that the two functions are inseparable ; in particular, we are far from asserting that there can be a religious process unless knowledge is largely involved ; as appears from the whole analysis of the nature of religion. Alongside of this preliminary remark we note further that the votaries of science and art are far from expecting every one to share their pursuits—on the contrary, such pursuits are often expressly lauded, as a

privilege belonging to intellectual distinction. It is quite different in the moral and religious spheres. No moral or religious person can admit that others are under no obligation to be moral and religious, though in both respects there are differences as regards degree and significance.

We come now to the essentials. With *science* (cf. "Ethics," 386 ff.) religion has in common an intense interest in the truth in the simple sense of the word. That was a fundamental point with us before when we spoke of the idea of God. But how they differ in their anxiety for the truth! The purer science is, the nearer it attains to its ideal, the more entirely does it separate what it seeks to know from the value that this has for the knowing subject. It sinks itself so completely in the object that it forgets the subject. This is not to say that the human mind is capable of doing anything valueless for itself; but the value of knowledge depends upon its comprehending the object to be known as completely, as exactly, and as little influenced by any outside consideration as is at all possible. The religious man on the other hand, seeks to know the truth of God, because his own life depends thereon; he has the greatest conceivable personal interest in the truth of the world of his faith. He has as little intention of deceiving himself as the scientific investigator—in this respect, truth has precisely the same significance for both—but he is anxious not to deceive himself regarding the object because of the importance of the object for the subject, while the man of science is anxious for the sake of the object, is concerned about its nature, apart altogether from its importance for the subject. Points of resemblance and difference show most clearly as the struggle of science after truth has also been called a service of God. And rightly so, for it doubt-

less involves an aspiration of the soul above the phenomenal, the natural, the finite, a struggling after an infinite, a subordination of self to an unconditioned. The mind is inspired by the ideal of truth, and renders homage to that ideal. If that knowledge leads it to the thought of the Absolute, it stands in relation to that thought as it does to any other, seizing it in its pure objectivity without regard to its significance for the mind itself. For the religious man, as we saw, there is something different from this in his knowledge of God, his aspiration towards God and his homage to Him.

Regarded from this point of view, life in the world of *the beautiful* seems much more akin to the religious life (cf. "Ethics," pp. 390 ff.). Here, certainly, we have to do with a value that can be experienced in feeling; a value moreover that at first sight has the closest affinity with religious satisfaction. How often is the effect of Art extolled, as blessing and making free, offering "redemption by sight," raising us above the contradictions of actuality, and setting us in a kingdom of undisturbed harmony, so that life for Art's sake can actually be called a life in the eternal? Is not religion also life in the eternal? Is it not the fact, moreover, that the free play of the imagination is also the principal means for the expression of religious ideas, not only in the imperishable works of creative Art, Poetry and Music, but as we saw in the simplest utterance of religious truth? Is not even our religion dependent upon parables, and how can they be created or understood without imagination? But mark now the striking contrast! Art lives by the beauty of its illusions; for religion even the most beautiful illusion means death. Art embodies the content of some sensation, and the more perfectly it succeeds in setting this forth, the more perfect it is. But whether there is a corresponding actuality, apart from

the esthetic feeling, is a question which has no significance from the point of view of Art. Indeed, what we do is to run away from the pressure of actuality into the world of beautiful fancy; and so Art becomes to multitudes who are no longer able to find the actual living God, a substitute for religion—according to the conviction of the religious man who knows what actual redemption is, a substitute of inferior value, and yet fraught with danger.

Different again is the relation of *morality* and religion (cf. "Ethics," pp. 13 ff.). They are at one in the high value they put upon the will, since both look lightly upon the mere feeling for the beautiful as upon something unsubstantial, and lacking in seriousness in the deepest sense. They are at one also in their demand on others—their universal demand—that all men ought to be moral and religious. All that was said above as to the importance of the obligation as towards God would have to be repeated and emphasized here. Without appreciation of the moral imperative, there is no entrance on the course of Christian piety, and the latter never exists without being proved in the moral life. There is further a sort of connexion between the moral and the religious, according to their content as well, at all the stages, in all the forms of religion, even what is for us religiously most horrible, and morally most detestable, up to our perfectly moral religion, in which piety and goodness are wholly inseparable, because our God is the alone good and perfect One, and in which the whole life is replete with piety and morality. But it is just here where they are most at one, that the difference comes most clearly to view. Morality is concerned with an unconditional law, a binding ideal, the realization of which by us is our chief end, and so far at all events our highest good; religion with the reality of the supernatural power

of which we spoke as interested in us, laying claim to our trust and reverence, and blessing us,—which as gracious is our highest good. And this distinction is not abolished even in Christianity, where the highest good is communion with the good God who makes us good. Moral obligation does not in this way lose any of its exalted solemnity, for the good of which we speak belongs to those who are good, but it does lose the sting of its unattainableness, and the still more painful sting of guilt; "Only when we are made righteous, do we do what is righteous" (Luther). Now there we have the further distinction between religion and morality, that the former is experienced by the separate person in another way still from the latter, viz. in respect of its individual character; and in saying this, we do not need to make special reference here to the importance of the community for religion.

We see that all the higher spiritual life is concerned with the infinite, the unconditioned, the eternal, but science with the ideal of truth for the spirit purely as knowing, art with the idea of the beautiful for the emotional self as capable of enjoyment, and morality with the subordination of the will to unconditional law, for the realization of the chief end. In all these the infinite remains confined within the spiritual life of man, though differently in science, art, and morality, and in the latter always on the point of transcending the limits in question. Religion, on the contrary, conceives of it unreservedly as the great reality independent of our spiritual life, although becoming active there. The philosopher, the artist, and the good man are alike strangers in the purely natural world with its finite magnitudes. The religious man rises superior to the whole world and finds his home in God. This is the paradox and miracle which has always marked religion in experi-

ence, even for those who were incapable of expressing their experience in grand-sounding words. Whether religion is right in this claim, whether it is true, is still an open question (meanwhile). But what has just been said is so decisive for our knowledge of the nature of religion, that only in the light of it does all that we have set forth in the preceding pages, regarding its content and its psychical form, become perfectly plain. And it is just this, apart altogether from any criticism of details, that really and essentially constitutes the great scientific discovery of Schleiermacher—the specialty of religion, its character as a personal experience of God gifted to souls that are true and on the watch, that, whether they are rich or poor as regards all other experience, and while they are free and fettered in themselves, desire to become free and rich in perfect subjection to God. To borrow the language of the Christian religion, they lay hold of His gracious will.

We find now that this comparison of religion with the other higher activities of the spirit helps to a settlement of the much-discussed question of what religion has to do with the VALUE-JUDGMENTS of which we hear so much. The passion with which in the last decades the view that religious judgments are value-judgments was assailed, would have been justified if those who used this expression had understood it in the sense which many of their opponents seemed to attribute to them. That is to say, if it had been left an open question whether the objects which find expression in judgments of value, God, eternal life, Christ, and the forgiveness of sins, are real or not. In that case, judgments of value would certainly deserve the epithet "vile," and no term of abuse would be too strong for them. Only it has always been inconceivable how such an opinion could have been attributed to religious men, or to theologians

setting forth the nature of religion. For the being or non-being of religion depends on the reality of God, as we have insisted again and again, in the foregoing. There is no justification even for the milder form of the reproach of which we speak, that religion certainly does not leave the reality of God and the whole world of faith an open question, on the contrary affirms them with all earnestness, but does so only on account of their value ; this value is the only ground that can be adduced for their alleged reality—in other words, they are assumptions or postulates. Or at least this is the contention of those opponents of judgments of value who speak with most warrant—such judgments are certainly, according to the conviction of those who uphold them, judgments about what really exists, but they are based simply on subjective experience ; and that really means in the last resort that they are baseless, when they fail to acknowledge that the needs for which man obtains satisfaction in experience are grounded on norms of our mental life which are self-attested (Lüdemann). On the contrary we have again and again urged that religion sees the proof of its reality in manifestations of the Godhead, which presents itself as active.

In order now to understand the proper sense of the expression "religious judgments of value," as against such misrepresentations, and to determine whether there is any objection to this sense, we must start from the fact that judgments of value are by no means peculiar to the religious sphere, as the controversy in question often seemed to imply, but that here, they certainly receive a modification which makes their justification necessary. Their peculiarity is due to the fundamental distinction which was spoken of in all mental activity, the theoretical and practical forms. There are judgments of value then in all provinces. In that of the

natural impulses and inclinations: "This is pleasant," "that is unpleasant". In that of law and morals: forbidden and permitted. They are most important in the field of those higher psychic activities, which we have just discussed. Here they aspire to the character of universal validity; namely, the judgments: something is true or false, beautiful or ugly, good or evil. The trait of absoluteness applies to them all, but with the differences which were there adduced.

What is peculiar to the religious value-judgment is found, as we now see, in the fact that, as was shown above, it is a pronouncement about a supreme reality which is independent of our spiritual life, which is transcendent in relation to it, a pronouncement about God. This is the great objection to the religious value-judgment. And yet it is just here that we have the claim which religion cannot abate. How now can such a judgment be defined with the proper qualifications so as to prevent its becoming a mere postulate? The fact is this. The validity of the judgments of faith for the believer depends on the living conviction that the supreme reality in question manifests itself, but only to one who consents to recognize its reality as of value for him personally, not in the irresistible way in which the laws of logic demand recognition. (The similarity and the difference as we compare with esthetics and ethics, are discovered from what was said above. Thus the believer does not regard what is valuable as real, because it is valuable for him, but because it meets him as real. It meets him, however, not as a reality which no one can deny—rather as one which only he can acknowledge, who is willing to acknowledge its value personally. Or as has been said with special appropriateness in reference to the highest stages of religion, "Religious value-judgments are judgments of trust with reference

to divine revelations". In this sense there are and must be religious value-judgments; religion stands or falls with them. But then it is manifest that this special kind of certainty must have a foundation, must be justified against obvious objections. In other words, we are here face to face with the task of the proof of the truth, which will meet us later, as what is really decisive for Christianity. For the problem inevitably arises whether such a way to certainty regarding the objects of faith may not be impassable, unnecessary or impossible, on account of the legitimate claims of conclusive knowledge. There lies the abiding interest of the controversy regarding value-judgments, and not in the absurd misrepresentations to which the expression has so often been subjected.

There still remains the fourth and last point of view, under which we proposed to consider religion. We have dealt with its nature according to its content, and its place in the psychic life, and then with its relation to the other higher spiritual activities. Those sections fitly conclude with the question of the

Origin of Religion

We started from the principle that "nature" and "origin" should be strictly distinguished. Overhasty treatment of the origin is often fatal to accurate determination of the nature, while such determination naturally limits the field of inquiry into the origin in various directions, and conduces to a correct statement of the question. For there can certainly be no doubt that the individual members of a religious communion first become religious through the agency of education, and that on the other hand the first beginnings of history in this department as in all others are hid from us, so that the question of the origin appears to fall to the

ground altogether. Only, in reference to the former clause, however highly we may estimate the power of religious education, and admit that many men, their whole life long, scarcely move beyond what they have grown up accustomed to, yet in our province just as much as in that of the other main activities of the human mind, which we have discussed, we cannot get away from the question, "*From what powers in the inner life of man,* working in conjunction with powers presupposed as external thereto, do such education and force of habit become intelligible?"—the pious person, of course, reserving for himself the right to recognize with reverence the action of God in the whole process. This question is forced upon us directly by our investigation of the nature, and is the relevant starting-point for the investigation of the origin. And if in reference to the second clause we were more favourably circumstanced than we are, if our historical vision reached farther back than is actually the case, the task just indicated would still arise. To this task, therefore, we must attend with all care; it is the important one. But further, by our knowledge of the nature of religion, we have gained a norm for judging of many of the answers to the question of its origin: every theory of the origin is false which contradicts the observed facts, from which we established its nature.

Thus, first of all, the explanation of religion as the product of statecraft and priestly deception needs no refutation. Not only because it must have ceased, after these corrupt sources were exposed, but because they altogether fail to account for the superstructure, the explanation of which is in question. Nor are we helped by calling in the aid of the theory of heredity—for example, the favourite expression "social fictions," which are supposed to have established themselves by

propagation through countless generations, and among which religion is the most powerful (Max Nordau). And the derivation of religion which was long current from primitive views of the need of causality, a need satisfied by what appeared in a garb formed by the arts of poetic imagination, does not hit the peculiarity of the process, as we have come to understand it. Even more profound attempts manifestly suffer from a disproportion between the explanation proposed and the matter to be explained. In the middle of last century there was an inclination to explain the whole by man's natural disposition to personify the world; and then to derive the whole from the worship of souls, religion being described as "Animism" (Lippert, Spencer). Others combined the two methods, holding that from the inclination of the human Psyche "to perceive animated beings everywhere," from this "assumption of two modes of life," there arose "the worship of souls and the personification of nature". Imagination has been largely applied to the experiences of dream-life and those connected with death and with processes in external nature, so as to make the desired result appear probable. Many descriptions by poets of this kind who don the mantle of science, are as plainly detailed as if they had been present when the first religious impulses of primitive man were formed. But in such an attempt, the matter to be explained is far too readily presupposed in one way or another. For why is help sought from those souls and spirits, or from those personified objects of nature, by rendering homage to them? It marks a great step in advance, when this difficulty in explaining religion by "personification and imagery" is felt at all,—a process which would really be in strictness a case of creation out of nothing. Hence the fact is deserving of attention that, of late,

the view is expressed with increasing frequency, that we must not by any means claim that every species of magic, associated with souls and spirits which are supposed to exist, is religious; but that only those souls and spirits that somehow exercise permanent influence are to be recognized as gods (Ed. Meyer). Whether it is right or wrong, such a thesis testifies to a deeper apprehension of the problem.

The question is raised in a pertinent manner only when those fundamental characteristics which constitute the essence of the religious process (pp. 36 ff.) are investigated with a view to whether they can be referred back to *one*, and that one can be understood as the precise activity of the soul by which, in combination with powers presupposed without the soul, the religious process may be explained. Clearly we cannot for this purpose start from the idea of God; first the possibility at all events remains open that this itself can be explained as a product of that simplest element of which we speak; and the same is true still more manifestly of homage. The processes again which are regarded as revelation are that doubtless only in their effects upon a soul susceptible thereof. There remains, therefore, as the starting-point only the struggle for life, the impulse to solve the contradiction between the claim to life and the experience of life as an actuality. Out of this, according to what is certainly the dominant opinion of our day, in so far as it is not contented with these unsatisfactory answers, arises the idea of the Supernatural Power, or in other words the readiness to regard certain processes within as well as in nature and history in the light of a revelation of this Power; out of it arises likewise the homage paid to this Power in reverent fear and trust.

The opponents of this view have often made

their refutation too easy by saying, "In the way described arises not religion but civilization: the stress of life educates man for the conflict therewith; for the discovery of all sorts of instruments; for knowledge and power of every kind, and only such as weaklings fell upon the thought of seeking help from a higher Power". For this misunderstanding, inaccurate expressions of many modern philosophers of religion were certainly greatly to blame, since without qualification they made the human spirit under all sorts of pressure, "exercise its religious function," seeing in every need the "flywheel" that sets religion in motion. The more earnest, however, have always meant simply that the feeling of limitation, which arises at the impassable outside limit of all our present knowledge and power, is the starting-point for the seeking of help from a higher Power. They thus rightly distinguished between the impulse to civilization and that to religion; and they could easily show how each forward step in civilization always leads to new limitations, felt perhaps with doubled severity, while others, like sickness and death, it never removes; so that religion cannot by any means be superseded by progress in civilization. But there now emerges another point which is no less certain: if the adherents of the theory set to work in an accurate way, they must give it a more precise definition, which shows that it is essentially less valuable than they often assume. They must not lose sight of the ambiguity in their statement, "The religious process necessarily follows from the feeling of the limitations of life". This statement may mean: necessarily in every being which feels as its own a need that cannot be removed by any effort of its own, or any combined action in conjunction with other beings of a like nature. So understood, the statement is unquestionably false. We can quite well

imagine a being which acquiesces in this feeling, and rests satisfied with its experience of its own limitations. If on the other hand we assume in man the impulse not to despair though he has reached the limits of his own strength, but to realize that yearning for life, of which we speak, the impulse in question must be recognized as a strictly ultimate fact. In it, in this imperturbable optimism, we can then certainly discern the motive which sets to work under certain influences of nature and of human life to construct the idea of God, to appeal to God, to explain this or that experience as a manifestation of God. Others will be disposed to say at once that we must also assume an original faculty for the perception of the divine. But it is more correct, because more certain to meet with universal assent, to stop short in the first instance with that yearning for life which refuses to despair, and without looking elsewhere to see in this the capacity for religion.

In dealing with the question of the *origin* of religion, we have now reached the point at which quite naturally, by an inner necessity, this question passes into the question of its *truth.* More exactly, this last point which we have just established will be judged differently by every one according to his personal attitude to religion, and his judgment regarding its truth. The man who personally rejects religion will express his attitude in some such way as this. It arose long ago in the manner described, under primitive conditions, and still arises under the influence of thousands of years of ancient tradition and heredity. But because the advance of knowledge proves God an illusion, the modern man must renounce religion. He takes up the position that the human spirit has as its own peculiar possession a forward impulse which satisfies itself in other ways, within the limits of this present world, without aspiring beyond

the world, but of course always only imperfectly, perhaps in the progress of the race—an unlimited "plus ultra". Here we would have that "infinity of feeling" which we have already spoken of, and which many people of the present day, without sufficient reason, still call religion (p. 43). In this optimistic impulse to go beyond every limitation of knowledge and will, the religious man, on the other hand, will see not only the basis of religion as a fact in human life, which the others also admit it to be, but the basis designed by God Himself, and always in evidence anew according to God's will—the permanently valuable capacity for religion; and for him this capacity is itself a work of God which is eternally present (see later, in the Doctrine of God and the World). And he will likewise regard the external influences which develop this capacity as actual revelations—workings intended as revelations by God. Indeed, he will assume what we have just set aside, an original mental faculty for the perception of God, and will see in this the ultimate ground for the yearning for life of which we speak, not contrariwise the ground for the idea of God in the yearning for life. For this we can even appeal to our opponents, who believe that they can satisfy the optimistic refusal to despair in other ways; so that in any case no proof is furnished by them that under certain circumstances it must necessarily satisfy itself in the form of real religion. And we have already asked whether the yearning for life can be fully understood as it reaches beyond the world of the person concerned, unless there is a feeling after a supernatural Power.

However that may be, in any case, the religious man is not put out by the reproach that what is professedly the highest moment of man's spiritual life, the religious, is essentially conditioned by human needs. Strange to

say, even many who have believed in God have agreed with this reproach that such an explanation of religion is unworthy. To the religious man, on the contrary, it seems worthy of God and man that God should accomplish His highest purpose by the most insignificant means, making the deepest poverty the foundation of the greatest riches. Thus, for example, Luther says on Psalm CXVIII. : " Let him learn here, who can learn, and let every one also become a falcon that can soar aloft into the heights in such need. It says, ' I cried unto the Lord '. Thou must learn to cry. Come now, thou lazy rascal, fall down upon thy knee and set forth thy need with tears before God." This quotation illustrates for us one other point in the judgment of the religious man with reference to the matter before us. He may lay stress upon the circumstance that homage before God appears to his consciousness as a claim on his responsible will, in no way as a constraining necessity. Even what meets him as the most potent revelation seems to him like a question on God's part, whether he is willing to kneel down, and uplift himself to God. Further, in all the higher religions the content of the manifestations of God is of such a kind, that the religious man feels himself unaffected by the reproach of selfishness, though certainly he can never force this judgment of his on the man who despises religion. Thus in all respects there is a vindication of the pious person's conviction that he has not made his God to suit himself, that religion is not a creation of man, but of God. Research in the field of the psychology of religion, however, has enabled us to obtain a deeper insight into the actual circumstances connected with this marvellous creative act, and has furnished the pious person with ground for more heart-felt adoration. Thus while we adopt a course which we of the present day can follow, one

which is marked out for us by the knowledge of the present day, we reach the same point from which we started when dealing with the question of the Nature of Religion, and which was reached of old, in a way of their own, by Calvin and the other Reformers. Now when we are engaged in the exposition of the nature of our religion, it will no longer be possible to have any doubt whatever on the matter; and the possibility will always be less, in proportion as we approach the culmination of that religion, viz. the assurance of salvation through faith. Who could suppose it is based on human desire, or deny that man's destiny is realized in it? Who could possess it except in deepest humility acknowledged in honour of God, or without joy and gratitude for the attainment of true life? Who would regard it otherwise than as a pure gift of grace from the Creator, or without a sincere sense of responsibility? Our whole existence, as our self-consciousness immediately attests, places us under obligation to God: we did not make ourselves, and therefore do not exist for ourselves. But just when we recognize this obligation, we find our life, viz. in God. And God awakens the recognition of the fact that we are under obligation, when He grants us life as we share in His own. As we have but imperfect conceptions for this last mystery of our existence, of which we experience in religion a gracious revelation, as well as abysmal depths which are ever opened up anew, a reference may be permitted to Michael Angelo's Creation of Adam. Here the imagination of the artist gives an embodiment and vivid perception of what was said in inadequate language regarding the communion between God and man,—visualizes the sovereign pronouncement of God in human form, "Let there be"; the will of the man formed in God's likeness, characterized as it was by reverential

trust; the Creation of the responsible being, and the dependence of the latter, conjoined with a devotion which was freely accorded.

Only now have we the right in one word more to come to the question of the *historical origin* of religion, if we can so call it, seeing it lies outside of our historical knowledge. What we can say regarding it in the form of a hypothesis, is, conformably to what was said at the beginning, essentially the same as we adduced regarding the origin in general. It springs from the religious capacity in the sense defined above, and working in conjunction therewith occurrences in nature, and in the social life of man, or special inward experiences, which produce the impression of a revelation of God, or it may be of higher powers. In this connexion one may consider the probability for the first beginnings of special manifestations of God, to which many have applied the name *Parastasis*, a special drawing near on the part of God in some sort of visible form. For Christian dogmatics, however, all consideration of the first beginnings is of value only in connexion with the question of the stage in human progress which they represent. On the basis of conclusions drawn from the religious condition of the lowest tribes still in existence, most historians of religion believe that this should be placed as low as possible. Fetishism or, as most now think, animism appears to them the beginning of religion. The facts, which in the nature of the case admit of many explanations, and in the explanation of which people are more influenced by their personal attitude than they commonly admit, by no means necessitate this theory. Other facts, or the same facts differently explained, for example the idea of One God, which is also found in tribes of low standing, have led other investigators to the hypothesis of an original Henotheism: "Without the thought of God

there are no gods". In these last years this hypothesis has once more gained support, and that too among those who have an accurate knowledge of the facts, in part newly discovered or newly appreciated (Ewe and Batac religions, etc.). But if Dogmatics is to speak decisively on this point, or without prejudicing her interests by passing beyond her proper borders, she must defer consideration of it to another place, namely the doctrine of Sin.

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

When we were investigating the questions which are indispensable in order to determine what religion is, we had to insist upon the importance of the fact that religion presents itself to us as a PRIMARY FORM OF HUMAN FELLOWSHIP—we must not infringe upon what is called objective religion in the interests of subjective. This is a truth which had to be enforced by frequent repetition. We have now to make explicit use of it, if we are to realize the distinctive character of the Christian religion in the great whole of religion generally. Owing to the distinctive character of religious experience, the need for fellowship—the fundamental impulse of man's inner life of which we speak—is particularly widespread, strong, and lasting in this province. Not only is the religious man stirred in the depths of his whole being, and thus powerfully impelled to seek fellowship; there is added to this the conviction of the reality of his God, which we have often emphasized; he knows himself, therefore, to be a servant of the highest truth, and it is to him a religious duty to work for it. We understand then that every religious experience works for the creation of fellowship according to the measure of its strength. Moreover, the nature of the working depends upon the experience. Now this ex-

perience is always definite and specific, never religion in general. Reference was also made to the fact that there is no "natural" general religion; there are only concrete, definite, "positive" religions, even if, compared with others, they are very indefinite. In order to understand this individual character of the various religions, we must consider the form assumed by the four fundamental characteristics which we have discussed. For we find that the form of one influences that of all the others; thus in the different religions the same words have quite different meanings, as for example, the Unity of God in Islam and in Christianity. The specific form of the idea of God, the chief good and the worship, is often called the material principle of a religion; the specific form of the revelation assumed and believed in, by means of which it finds a basis for its truth, and according to which its content (the material principle) is determined, is called the formal or epistemological principle. Only here as elsewhere the expressions are not always used in the same sense. These points of view, then, guide our survey of the many religions in their relation to Christianity.

They may be exhibited in many ways, and almost every resulting CLASSIFICATION brings to the front an important aspect of the matter. For our purpose it is sufficient to point out that as regards the material principle, the classification according to the nature of the blessings desired is the simplest arrangement of the almost infinite fullness of the facts; this confirms and explains with the help of the newer history of religion the fundamental division according to stages and classes, into polytheistic and monotheistic, natural and ethical religions, already suggested by Schleiermacher. It also readily lends itself to the setting forth of the distinction emphasized by other investigators—in so far as justified

—between the religions of non-civilization (more accurately of a poor civilization) and of civilization. Again, there is the distinction between legal religions and religions of redemption, which is significant especially for Islam on the one hand, and for Brahmanism, Buddhism and Christianity on the other, proving the latter to be distinguished from each other by the ethical character of the chief good and the definition of it in detail. Only it must be remembered in reference to this terminology, that the name "religion of redemption" is itself understood in a definite narrower sense, for in the wider all religions are religions of redemption. For the purpose of a cursory glance, that primary classification of which we speak is by far the most satisfactory; and the fact that the actual religious life of mankind everywhere shows these forms passing into one another, only deepens its worth for actual insight into this very intricate subject.

But this classification based upon the material principle has now to be combined with one drawn from the formal principle. Here again, however, it is sufficient to point to the fundamental forms which we have already learned to distinguish, and which likewise as they meet us in the actual world of religion pass over into one another at many points. In the narrower sense then those religions are called "religions of revelation," which are based upon historical revelation and in consequence on the work of a definite founder; though as a matter of fact, as we have seen, there is no religion without some sort of revelation (or belief in revelation). Those religions of revelation in the definite narrow sense of the term, are, as regards their content, simply because they claim to be based upon a special manifestation of God, so independent of their native soil that they consciously and purposely aim at universal recognition, that

is, engage in a world-mission, having vigour enough to be able to eliminate what is unessential and temporary, to assimilate foreign matter of value, and to form a theory of the universe and a moral ideal out of what is their very own, amalgamated with this element which has been adopted (Harnack). But for this purpose they need a more reliable means of propagation than oral tradition, namely sacred Scriptures, which enable them to preserve their original individuality by continual reference back to the beginnings.

Though it is quite easy in a general way to determine the place of our CHRISTIAN RELIGION in this tabular survey of the religions, great difficulties present themselves, whenever we attempt to characterize it more precisely in advance, in a few sentences. There is no doubt that with peculiar emphasis it claims to be the monotheistic ethical religion, and consequently there is no doubt in what sense it claims to be the religion of redemption. There is no doubt that with fuller consciousness than any of the others it traces its origin to historical revelation. But as soon as we attempt to fill out this framework ever so little, we cannot get away from the fact that, especially in our day, *the most varied answers* are given *to the question of the nature* of Christianity; even theologians closely akin to each other regard as essential only that to which they give the name of "the nature," and that in both the main relations, the definition of the content as well as of its ground in the revelation believed in. What a strange sound has this latter thought altogether to many of our contemporaries! How evident does it appear to them that Christianity may be separated from its founder! There is no less diversity of judgment in reference to the content—the place occupied in the whole range of Christian saving truth by the forgiveness

of sin, the hearing of prayer, and the eternal consummation. It has been found a profitable task to compare the views on the subject held by different outstanding men, whose images still live in the universal consciousness; in consequence not a few have gained the impression that the points of divergence outweigh the inner unity. Is it different when we leave the present and take a historical survey? What is "legitimate development," and what is "essential deviation"? What type of Christianity is to be regarded as most truly Christian—Eastern or Western, Roman or Evangelical, "Old" Protestant or "Modern" Protestant? Or does the essence of Christianity realize itself in the totality of these manifestations? If it should be supposed to realize itself in all in like manner, that would manifestly be to forego all knowledge of the essence; and what would be worse, we should be compelled to see in the whole process the necessary evolution of the "idea of Christianity" (perhaps as Hegel understood it), which would deny responsibility and sin. If on the other hand we evangelical Christians seek the norm for the history in the testimonies of its first age, and if to justify such a proceeding, we may appeal in general to the historical consideration that the more definite a religion is in itself, the more clearly does it show this definiteness in its beginnings, does not the same difficulty as above arise in new form? Is not Holy Scripture, even if we take only the New Testament, the book in which every one finds what he looks for? Has it everywhere in its pages the same content? Is it even clearly marked off from the later history?

Still this danger of subjective caprice is by no means so insuperable as at first sight it appears to be. For the New Testament by its very nature furnishes safeguards against it. That is to say, there are striking pas-

sages where it bears clear testimony to the well-marked distinctive character of the Gospel, calculated though it be in certain circumstances to cause offence. For example, 1 Corinthians I. 22 ff., in combination with Matthew XI. 27 ff., gives expression in the most pointed manner possible to its paradoxical character, and that, too, in reference both to its content and its indissoluble connexion with its Founder as being in visible form the express image of God, who as Holy Love receives sinners into fellowship with Himself. It is certainly possible for human imperfection, and personal aversion to the distinctive character of our religion, "to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness," to mislead us here again into inaccurate apprehension of the picture of it which appears in its primary documents. But mere caprice must always reveal itself as such; what are really the essentials will always shine through it. This is the main conclusion to which we come as the result of the survey of the development of Christianity which we have made, which may in the first instance be misleading. For not only have all its changing forms made some sort of appeal to the New Testament foundations, but they have had enduring significance in proportion as they succeeded in proving their own consistency therewith. In this comparison of the developed product with the origin, what belongs to the essence always comes more clearly into view. The beginning itself proves to be the germ of a fruitful development, a germ of paramount significance, including in a productive form elements which are seemingly opposed to each other; the word development, which is so often misused, having here good warrant, because it has its clear and proper sense. The subjectivity which remains after all this, the possibility of error and even of misconstruction and perverted judgment, can be under-

stood by the man of faith from the nature of religion: we are meant to understand and reverence God and His work, but we are not compelled to do so. Again, if we seek to determine the nature of our religion in the manner we have indicated, the proceeding is one to which no objection can be taken; for the reason that we thus arrive at a determination of the nature, to prove the truth of which according to the opinion of our opponents is manifestly not easier but more difficult, than if we were content with a quite colourless concept of the essence of Christianity. A series of the most weighty objections do not affect such a mere abstraction at all, but they do affect the sharply defined view which we get by following the path we have chosen. The doctrine of Revelation and of Holy Scripture, to be treated later, will elucidate all this by means of examples.

In order to determine the essence of Christianity, first of all according to the three first fundamental characteristics of religion of which we have spoken (the Material Principle as it is called), we may start from any of them; for they correspond to each other, and the higher the religion concerned, the more exact is this correspondence. At the same time the idea of God or the religious blessing supposed to be conferred, is naturally better suited to be the starting-point, and the latter again in preference to the former, that means for this preliminary survey which is to be made the basis of our proof of the Christian religion; whereas in Dogmatics proper everything will be set forth with the idea of God as the guiding principle, for our starting-point. If we start from the accepted position that the Christian religion is the perfectly moral one, we must observe that in the course of its history the emphasis has been placed at times rather on the religious aspect, and at other times

on the moral. The former was the case, for example, with the old Protestant Theology and Schleiermacher, the latter with the Enlightenment and with Kant; and such difference of emphasis in dealing with what is one and the same truth has not seldom found expression in the preference for the concept "Kingdom of God" on the one hand, or on the other, "redemption" or "reconciliation," to denote the religious blessing of Christianity. As a matter of fact both imply that Christianity claims to be both the perfectly moral *religion*, and the perfect *moral* religion; and the only difference between them is that the second expressly points to the content of the first as designed for sinners who are to be redeemed and reconciled. But the idea of the Kingdom of God as more exactly defined with the help of the idea of reconciliation is better suited for a general expression for the essence of Christianity, from the point of view of the religious blessing offered, than other expressions which have been proposed, such as life, love, sonship to God, restored communion with God, the instituting of a humanity for God, justification by faith. For reasons similar to those which hold good in Christian Ethics, the idea of the Kingdom of God, only regarded in another point of view, deserves the preference. It is true that "justification" has the merit of giving effect to the Protestant watchword, even in the determination of the essence; but for all that it is far too definite for the start. On the other hand there is too little of the distinctively Christian note about "Life" and "Restored communion with God". "Sonship to God" again does not suggest the community as surely as "Kingdom of God" does the individual; and a "Humanity for God" is modelled too much upon an isolated Biblical phrase.

To be sure, objections are urged against the use of the term *Kingdom of God* also, and that too in the name

of the New Testament. These objections are not quite the same as in Christian Ethics; for it is easier for Dogmatics than it is for Ethics to utilize the fact that the phrase originally meant the rule of God. But we are told that its signifying essentially the rule of God as perfected is a barrier to its use in Dogmatics likewise. Here again, however, we need only to point out that Dogmatics manifestly uses the phrase, not as a single constituent element of the original Christian message, derived immediately from the New Testament, but as a comprehensive general term for that message as a whole, arrived at as the result of reflection; and that there are good grounds inherent in the nature of the case for choosing *Kingdom of God* for this purpose, though that can be proved only by our whole presentation of Christian truth. Attention may also be directed to the fact that this phrase is found from time to time upon the lips of the greatest in the history of our religion, as a watchword used to express their conviction of the identity of their new interpretation of Christianity with its original form; take for example, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Spener and Schleiermacher, even though they did not use it as a regulative principle as here proposed. Luther's simple exposition of the second petition reminds us at the same time how even in the New Testament, in Paul and John, faith and love serve to elucidate it.

Even in the Old Testament, "Kingdom of God," i.e. rule of God, is a religious pronouncement full of spiritual and moral impressiveness, although it is never completely divorced from the national and the political. It next becomes in the Apocalyptic Literature of Judaism a term embracing every miracle which transcends the ordinary course of the world; while in the Gospel the national husk of which we spoke completely disappears, and we have the consummation of the transcendent

element without any sacrifice of actuality: in its purely spiritual and moral nature it does in truth transcend the world and is the Reality of all realities. The rule of God is the actualization of His almighty will, which alone is good. God receives men into the fellowship of His love, that reality which is most precious. He thus excites in them love to Himself and to each other, and in both respects, in His love as experienced and reciprocated and in love to each other, causes them to experience His blessedness. The two are absolutely inseparable; for men cannot otherwise participate in the blessedness of God who loves the world. It is in this fellowship of love with God and with each other that they are raised above the world, gaining the victory over it—mastering it; all is subject to them just as surely as it is subject to God, in subjection to whom their blessedness consists. This fundamental idea fills the whole New Testament, and is applied in the most diverse ways. We have the parables of the treasure, the pearl and the wedding feast, what is said of unlimited forgiveness of our brother; and the beatitudes addressed to those who are called sons of God, who see God, and who are to be satisfied as being of a pure heart, as hungering after righteousness, as being peace-makers, and as suffering persecution. The two things are always indissolubly connected, communion with God in love and love to each other. In both we have at once independence of the world, and a well-assured hold upon it, so that it is only reflection that can distinguish the two aspects; e.g. in the parable of the wedding feast, sitting at table with God on the one hand and with the perfected saints on the other. Peace springs (Phil. iv. 1 ff.) from joy in the Lord, sanctified freedom from anxiety, the certainty that the Lord is near, as well as from the fact that Christians

think on whatsoever things are righteous and honourable and virtuous. Special emphasis is laid in 1 John upon the children of God having their life in love of the brethren (III. 14 ff.), as well as in the experience of the love of God who first loved us (IV. 7 ff.).

We have simply another side of the same truth when prominence is given to the blessing of the Christian religion, the Kingdom of God, as at once a gift and a task. This follows from its inmost nature. The love of God even cannot actualize itself in the hearts of men by the exercise of omnipotence, as it can do in the realm of nature: it makes its appeal to trust; and on the other hand even Christian love to God and our neighbour is itself a gift of grace and a blessing, and not at all merely a duty. The gift and the task cannot be separated; no one can participate in the gift who does not apply himself to the task it involves, while again no one can engage in the task without the power that comes from the gift. This is what makes Christianity *the* moral religion: its appeal is to a personal act of will; even in regard to the acceptance of the gift, such acceptance becomes itself the task, and thereupon the gift accepted imposes new tasks. Nor can it be otherwise in view of the nature of the gift, seeing it is love. But the gift of the love of God to us occupies the first place, as surely as Christianity is the moral religion and not a system of morality with a religious basis. This clearly shows why and in what sense the idea of the Kingdom of God can be supreme for Dogmatics and Ethics; it shows further that Ethics is based upon Dogmatics (cf. "Ethics," pp. 127 ff.).

An accurate statement of the Christian religious blessing would now have to further define this idea of the Kingdom of God in all its aspects, by taking account of the other view-point we mentioned, namely that of

redemption (or reconciliation). This does not, as used often to be supposed, characterize Christianity solely in its religious aspect, whereas the term Kingdom of God indicates its moral nature; but is an important further determination of the fundamental concept Kingdom of God, which is moral and religious in one. The Kingdom of God is the supreme good of redeemed sinners—sinners who have to be redeemed both from the guilt and power of sin, and from all the evils which follow from sin. This applies again to all the relations they occupy—though we cannot discuss these in detail on every occasion—to God, to their neighbours, to themselves, to the world. Jesus' preaching of the Kingdom is combined with the call to repentance, and His purpose of saving that which was lost (Luke xix. 10) is identical with that of establishing the Kingdom of God. It is the indispensable means for the realization of the end of which we speak. Indeed it is the end itself regarded in a particular point of view, as we see at once when we consider here again what is the nature of the Kingdom, namely that it is righteousness, the state of perfect goodness, love. But in this connexion what is most significant for our religion is the unique combination of gentleness and severity, of absolute condemnation of sin and of unlimited forgiveness. Other religions appear to surpass Christianity in strictness; they give the name of sin to all conceivable sorts of things, and yet have no knowledge of guilt; in like manner they seem to offer grace on easier terms, and yet they bring no assurance of forgiveness. Looked at from this point of view also, Christianity proves itself *the* moral religion. We shall have to take this fundamental truth with us through the whole of Dogmatics; and last of all, in the Doctrine of Justification, it will be plainly set before us in all its unfathomable and incomparable value.

Here we must emphasize further that this Kingdom of God begins to be a reality in this present world, just as truly as it will reach its consummation only *in another order of things*. This also is a truth that does not depend upon the exegesis of particular New Testament passages, dealing with the Kingdom of God. Once again the proof of it is to be found in the nature of the Kingdom. The love of God would not be almighty if it could not cause itself to be experienced in spite of earthly conditions however opposed to it; nor again if it did not possess the power "to make all things new". Were it otherwise, the religious blessing would not be one of a moral and spiritual nature, as we have seen that it is, and the supreme value under consideration would not be the ultimate reality (cf. "Ethics," pp. 130 ff.). But in emphasizing this, we have at the same time reached the point where we can no longer speak definitely of the content of our faith (the material principle of Christianity), without mentioning that it is inseparable from the fact which is the foundation of its certainty, the revelation of God in Christ.

We have still to point out merely in passing that for the reasons already given, there is definite correspondence between the views held regarding the religious blessing, and those regarding the nature of God and the homage paid to Him. In Dogmatics proper it is really the idea of God that is decisive, and that of the religious blessing models itself upon it. But to begin with, it was simpler to start from the religious blessing, and it is sufficient to indicate, as we have done, that this is in line with the idea of the God who alone is good, the perfect Father in Heaven, who is love, and whose blessedness has its source in His love; whereas the blessedness of the heathen gods, even those of a loftier species, is self-enjoyment. With this agrees the Christian view of the

world and of man ; in a history which unfolds itself in time, throughout the whole period of their alienation God is winning created spirits for fellowship with Himself. But the homage upon condition of which this eternal Love of God actualizes itself cannot for its own sake be a service of God, according Him something other than the reverently grateful response to the creative word of His love. Trust is the only service of God applicable to our religion.

All these statements, however, regarding the religious blessing, the idea of God, and the personal relation to God in Christianity, would be incomplete, were they not related to the manner in which in our religion *Revelation* (the FORMAL PRINCIPLE) is viewed. Every religion, we saw, claims to rest in some way upon revelation, and bases thereupon both its special content and its truth ; the fact that it thinks of God as it does, that it expects from Him a definite religious blessing, and does so upon certain definite conditions, and that at the same time it believes that in this it is asserting no mere empty dream, but really has solid ground under foot, it traces to this that God has manifested Himself—proved Himself real. We Christians see this revelation perfected in Jesus ; He is the standard for the content of our faith, and the ground of its certainty. The recognition of Him as revelation has a deeper sense in our religion than any such we find in those other religions we have referred to, which also claim to rest upon historical revelation. Our relation to Jesus is different from that of the Israelites to Moses, or the Buddhists to Sakya-Muni, or the Mohammedans to Mohammed. For the Buddhist, in proportion as he himself becomes an Initiate, the first great Initiate retires into the background. Indeed, strictly speaking, it is against his own will that the latter has been put in the place occupied in the

various religions by revelation, and that his doctrine of self-redemption without God has in consequence been turned into a religion. The whole effort of a Paul, on the other hand, is to gain Christ, to be found in Him (Phil. III.). Every forward step only makes Christ more indispensable for him; and our oldest authorities prove that he does not misunderstand Jesus in assigning Him this place, but that He Himself claimed—"Neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son reveals Him" (Matt. XI. 27 ff). Islam sets up from the very start an inseparable relation between its adherents and Mohammed, the prophet, that is the revealer, of Allah. But faith in Mohammed is submission to the law which governs faith and life by principles alike inviolable. This law is true because Mohammed as the prophet has proclaimed it. There is, however, no essential connexion between it and his person. For us Christians on the contrary Jesus is the norm and basis of our faith, in the sense that, as regards its content and certainty, our faith is so inseparably connected with Him that He is its object. "We believe in God the Father Almighty and in Jesus Christ our Lord." This is not meant simply in the sense in which it is said of Moses that the people believed in Jahveh and His servant Moses (Exod. XIV. 31). What God does by the hand of Moses associates trust in Jahveh with trust in His instrument; just as in John XIV. 1—Ye believe in God; believe also in me. But the similarity which we have here only brings the difference into clearer relief. Since the revelation made through Moses, however it excels other examples, is after all only preparatory compared to that given in Jesus, is not yet the complete personal revelation of the purely Spiritual God of all goodness, Israel's trust in Moses is in consequence not so inseparable from trust in its God, as that which Christians repose in Jesus is

from trust in God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And this unique significance which belongs to Jesus as the historical revelation only comes out in a clearer light, when Christianity, so far from denying, lays quite special emphasis upon, the inward attestation which may also be spoken of as revelation, qualifications being reserved: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven"; "When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me"; "God hath revealed it unto us by His Spirit" (Matt. xvi. 17; Gal. i. 15 f.; 1 Cor. ii. 10). What does this refer to? The appropriation of the revelation of God in Jesus, the personal realization of the great historical reality.

In short, in our religion, the material principle and the formal principle, the content (the religious blessing, God, and the homage offered Him) and the foundation (the revelation accepted) are identical as they are in no other. Rightly understood, Jesus in whom we Christians see the perfect revelation of God, is Himself the religious blessing; He belongs to the side of God, our faith and our homage is faith in Christ and a bowing of the knee before Him to the glory of God the Father (Phil. ii. 9 ff.). Or if at this point these statements without qualification and proof may be open to attack, the conclusion at all events is that the religion and the Person under consideration cannot be separated; Jesus is somehow the "power of His gospel". In this sense He belongs to the gospel, He is the gospel. In this consists the unity of the faith, in spite of all the diversity of theological opinion. To examine the theological differences, and to find as accurate an expression as possible for the faith in question, will be the task of our whole detailed exposition of Dogmatics.

Many other questions which have often been raised in connexion with the matter before us cannot be de-

cided at this stage of our inquiries. There is the question, for example, whether the idea of revelation is adequate for the unique significance of Jesus. Ought He not at the very least to be described explicitly as the revelation of salvation, as redeeming us and reconciling us to God? In view of all that has gone before, our answer to the latter question is quite obvious; from the very start we have opposed the error of Intellectualism, which makes revelation the impartation of supernatural truths. We are unable to determine where the concept in question is defective—how far it is inadequate to indicate the reality of God in its supreme activity, which is manifestly His activity as directed towards the realization of the moral and spiritual blessing which is always His end, the Kingdom of God for sinners in need of redemption. But to give up the concept of revelation altogether must be not merely unnecessary but ill-advised, because it puts difficulties in the way of comparing our religion with others, and brings its distinctive character forward not in a more but in a less convincing form. However, we expressly defer all consideration of details, desirable as it may be in the interests of our subject. Thus, e.g. there is the question which is certainly an important one in its own place, whether Jesus in bringing us salvation from God is at the same time possessed of value for God, as in some sense He appears on our behalf before Him. But to discuss this question in the preliminary section of our work would readily lead to confusion. At this point it is only the unique significance of Jesus of which we have spoken that must be put in the forefront as belonging to the essence of our religion, and we must still confine ourselves to a general statement.

To vindicate the legitimacy of the faith of which we speak is one of the principal tasks of Apologetics—*the proof of the truth* of Christianity. It is as a foundation

for this that we have begun with this discussion of its nature, in order to learn what has to be proved, or if this is impossible, what we are to do instead. Is it possible to prove what we have asserted of the unique significance of the Founder of our religion—to prove that it is both intelligible and necessary in view of the general character of the religion under consideration, and in line with Jesus' own intention? Or is the "Christianity of Christ," which is separable from His person, the original and perfect Christianity? Our discussion so far has done this much at least for us: it has taught us to expect that the explanation of the special place which our religion assigns to Jesus will be found in the distinctive character of its content, the particular form assumed in it by the communion of which we spoke between God and man which is the goal in every religion. The Kingdom of God, of which we have spoken, in its unfathomable compass and majesty, particularly as being a kingdom for sinners, demands the personal self-revelation of the God of holy love who alone is good, provided that living personal trust in Him is to become a reality in the hearts of men. This further imposes upon us the duty of at least carefully examining our other question, the historical one.

At the close of this determination of the nature of our religion as a foundation for the proof of its truth, there is a further point which may be mentioned. For a more detailed exposition it would be highly rewarding to elaborate Schleiermacher's view of the *heresies* in Christianity. He himself does this with reference to the construction put upon Christ and human sin in their reciprocal relations: if such stress is laid upon human sin that there is a danger of its being denied that man is capable of redemption, the tendency in the doctrine of Christ will be so to overstate what is distinctive in

Him as to endanger His likeness to us. If on the other hand our views of sin were so low that there should seem to be scarcely any reason why we should affirm our need of redemption, we should think of Christ as not differing in essence from ourselves. Schleiermacher was thus the first, of set purpose, to mark off the foundation for an exposition of our faith as a truly coherent whole, showing the inner relation of every element in it to every other. He did this by fixing upon what is the decisive point for our religion, the doctrine of the Redeemer and of the redemption wrought by Him. It would be easy to show, however, that the mutually related errors we have mentioned in the doctrine of sin and in Christology by no means stand alone. Heresies in regard to the doctrine of God, the world, conversion, the Consummation, could be adduced in the same way, and these also act and react upon each other as well as along with those mentioned by Schleiermacher, in the most intimate fashion.

This whole determination of the nature of our religion occupies the distinctive STANDPOINT OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH. The Roman Catholic Church has an essentially different conception of Christianity. The religious blessing, the view of God, man's religious relation to God and the estimate put upon Jesus are all different. This statement is to be accepted here upon the authority of the science of Symbolics. All the differences between the two churches which strike the eye may be traced back to this fundamental difference of which we speak. According to our Protestant view, the religious blessing is the personal fellowship of trust with the personal God of Holy Love in the Kingdom of God through Christ, as we have described it. On this view the Church must be to us simply the fellowship of believers, who, inspired by the Gospel to the personal faith of which we speak,

communicate this faith-producing gospel to others. For Roman Catholics, on the other hand, the Church, as organized upon a legal basis, the hierarchy, is an object of faith: being infallible she guarantees the truth, in the sacraments she dispenses grace, in virtue of her divine authority she governs the life of believers. The fundamental reason why the Church as an institution is thus valued, is that a different view is held regarding the religious blessing: it is not of a purely personal and ethical character, but while it is indeed ethical, it is at the same time supersensible, though working through the senses; grace is not the gracious will of God of which we have spoken, which shows itself operative in Christ, but a mysterious sanctifying power. It is not possible to become assured of, and to participate in it, solely by personal trust, and in such trust itself to experience the impulse to and the power of the new life; by divine appointment all this depends upon the legally constituted Church. Or for our present purpose we may express the same truth quite briefly as follows: because the material principle is differently construed, there is a difference of view as to the formal principle as well. We mean by it, as we have seen, the revelation of God in Christ which produces faith, whereas the Church of Rome means the Church with her infallible hierarchy. She is the norm and basis of the truth, guaranteeing the truth of the salvation of which we have spoken, and in her sacraments as well as by her direction of souls making it effective; and in this way she herself becomes the chief good. This difference between our position and that of Roman Catholic Christianity will often engage our attention as we proceed; hitherto we only needed to point to fundamentals.

It might further seem desirable at this point to take up the thesis which is at present so warmly discussed,

that what we call Protestantism must be consciously distinguished as Neo-Protestantism from that of the Reformers, which is Old Protestantism (cf. Troeltsch). But in this case too, it is only our exposition as a whole that can give a satisfactory account of the matter. Here the question may suffice—Is Old Protestantism really only a transformation of mediaeval "ecclesiastical principles, characterized as they were by supernaturalism and dualism" essentially, when it is admitted that not only was the Sacramental system destroyed, but also the idea of grace became different as regards its content? A Protestantism of a general type again, without the living, personal God of grace, would no longer be a form of Christianity (cf. Ethics, p. 111 ff.). At present, the difference of the Reformation age from our own is not infrequently exaggerated in this respect among others that, in the former, faith in God is viewed as an inviolable presupposition. That is no doubt right, if it is the public vogue that is considered. But if we look to personal conviction in the depths of the heart, there was a raging conflict for the individual, even in that former period; as we may see, e.g. from Luther's treatise *De servo arbitrio.*

Lastly, in what sense the following exposition runs on distinctively *Lutheran* lines within Protestantism, only an examination of the separate statements as they occur can determine. At the same time here again we may call attention to the fundamental principle at all events. It is this. The opposition to the modern consciousness, so far as it is non-Christian, on the one hand, and on the other, the gentle pervasive influence of the New Testament sources of information which are common to all Protestants, or should become a common possession, have forced into the background the old points of difference between the Protestant Con-

fessions. This applies even to those who have no desire for any external union, and know well how to value the great heritage of their particular Church. The more this unity, which is not of the letter, in regard to the attitude of our hearts to the gospel grows among us, the less possibility will there be of any flirtation with the Church of Rome, as the Guardian of the "great truths of the faith which all Christians hold in common," and on the other hand, the greater the possibility of a genuine union in faith with the individual devout members of the Church in question.

THE TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

It is a matter of secondary consequence whether we speak of a "proof" of the truth or prefer the terms "establishment," "vindication" or "justification". Many think "proof" incorrect because they associate with this word a quite definite sense, of which in the nature of the case there can be no question here. But it is still quite undetermined what the character of the proof is. The same applies to the other words also. On the other hand, the foregoing discussion of the nature of our religion has made it still clearer than it was when we began, how *necessary* and how *difficult* such a proof or vindication is. We have got fresh light upon a series of the objections which are mentioned there, in their source and intention, and also at the same time in their seriousness. We found that religion, and especially our own, is so much a thing by itself, that we can readily understand how it looks to many men of our day like a stranger in their world. But while knowledge of its nature prevents our making light of the proof of its truth, it gives us the right sort of courage thereto. For one thing, we see that many objections to Christianity do not affect Christianity at all, as soon as we direct our attention to what Christianity really is, and not to some view of it as the creation of man's own fancy. We often hear it said, for example, that if the gospel had been right it must have long since conquered the whole world. But this does not accord with the judg-

ment of the gospel regarding the world; from the very start it combined with the feeling of the certainty of victory the clearest possible understanding of the extent of the opposition it had to encounter, indicating plainly enough the reasons for this opposition, among others the fact that the enigmas in the life even of Christians are challenges to their faith. Then again it is strange that the opponents of Christianity should believe themselves able to prove it untrue, because they find the amount of evil in the world incompatible with the love of God. They demand that we should prove a love which does not coincide with the Christian view of God: it is not surprising if the proof is unsuccessful.

This brings us to the second advantage which results from our knowing the nature of our religion before we enter upon the establishment of its truth—not only must the proof of the truth have reference to the nature as precisely determined, but rightly understood the nature as ascertained furnishes the basis for the proof of the truth. Or putting the matter more accurately, the end and method of a proof of the truth follow from the knowledge of the nature. Not every proof corresponds to the Christian faith which has to be proved; it is equally true that the faith cannot dispense with all proof. I give an illustration of what I am saying. Present day opponents of our religion lighten their task by dazzling and confusing its adherents by means of the variety of their weapons, and the rapidity with which they change them. "What must first be proved is not of much value." "Faith makes blessed, therefore it lies." Such are two catchwords which are in great favour (Nietzsche). Properly speaking they contradict each other, but both are supposed to hold good against Christianity. The first says, in its application to Christianity, that it needs no proof whatever, provided it is

of value: in that case it rather contains the proof in itself, from the simple fact that as it exists it is so precious. The second says that, if it refers to its effects in conferring blessedness, in order to prove its truth, what it does prove is only that it is of no value,—because it cannot get any other proof. A Christian will be specially willing now to admit what is true in both of them. As regards the former he will admit that he knows something of an inward certainty which cannot be forced by argument. "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit." As regards the latter, he will admit that he must exercise very special caution in the matter of finding a proof of the truth of his faith in anything that men have already indicated by the word "blessedness". But for these very reasons, he refuses to be afraid of one or other of these statements, or of a combination of the two. On the contrary, he invites his opponents to understand from the nature of faith, in what sense it does not require a proof, and again in what sense it requires one that cannot be charged with being a beautiful illusion.

A vindication of Christianity at a particular time is of value for the time in question, in proportion as it lays to rest the special objections then current. But in order to make it plain what our task is, we must glance at the history of Apologetics.

THE HISTORY OF APOLOGETICS

This history shows how the antagonism has assumed the special form which confronts us now, and what weapons, old and new, we of the present day have to employ. The Apologetics of the past falls into two divisions of very unequal length as regards time. Speaking quite generally we have to do, as we showed at the start, with the conflict between Faith and Knowledge.

Now though these two entities, Faith and Knowledge, have always dominated Apologetics, to begin with their nature was not investigated to the extent which the case requires; for who is to determine questions of right and wrong between opponents imperfectly discriminated? Schleiermacher was the first to endeavour to show scientifically what faith is; and Kant was the first, deliberately and of set purpose, to summon knowledge, the critic of all things, before the bar of criticism. Accordingly we group together all Apologetics prior to Kant and Schleiermacher, in spite of the important differences we discover, in one great period. If we look again only at the main features, and survey the history with a view to the understanding of our present task, it falls in the next place into the two subdivisions, Domination of Faith over knowledge and Domination of Knowledge over Faith. But because Faith and Knowledge were not yet known as they are distinguished from each other in their inmost essence, we can easily understand how Faith, not having been subjected to criticism, remained too near akin to Knowledge, without this being observed, and conceded to Knowledge far too extensive rights, thus injuring itself; while on the other hand, Knowledge, not having been subjected to criticism, was simply unproved Faith, and in consequence prejudiced real Knowledge.

The domination of faith, alongside of the great half-concealed influence of Knowledge, is the easily understood consequence of the victory of our religion over the Ancient World in the Ancient World. It was the victory of a Truth, which in its victory manifested itself as supernatural both in its content and in the mode of its attestation. The foolishness of God had overcome the wisdom of men; the proof of the Spirit and of power was on its side. Greater miracles no other religion could

claim, and the particular examples had all centred in the Miracle of all miracles, in the Name above every name, which was reverenced as that of Him who was the unsurpassable Revelation of the eternal God. But the victor expressed his victory to himself, supernatural as it undoubtedly appeared to him, in terms of the natural means of the vanquished; the product of the ancient culture was assimilated, modified by Christian Truth and in turn modifying it. Indeed it was in relation to the point here before us, the proof of the truth of Christianity, that the ancient culture of which we speak exerted its influence in the wonderful combination of beauty, truth, morality and religion, which constitutes the charm of Antiquity, but fails to do justice to the seriousness of religion as Christianity understands it. The boundary lines between these highest interests of man's inner life were not clearly defined. The beautiful was good and true, the good was true and beautiful, and religion was one with Art, Ethics and Philosophy. In Christianity there was a new experience now of divine truth, men felt within them a new power for the truly good; but the time had not yet arrived for the searching question, how this truth of God stands related to everything else which receives the name of true and good. Thus though enough could not be said in praise of revelation as something unheard of and unique, this point of view alternates only too rapidly with another, and revelation is regarded as the perfection of ordinary human reason. It is well known what combination of the Gospel with philosophy is presented to us in *Greek dogma*. And likewise in the *Roman Church*, alongside of absolute subjection to authority, a wide field is left to the natural intellect and will. In the beginnings of Scholasticism, the universal domination of the Church manifests itself in the claim to

furnish a proof of the necessity of the incarnation on a purely rational basis. In its best days reason was regarded as able at least to bring men in virtue of its own inherent power to the forecourts of Truth, to provide proofs of the being of God and to confirm the law of conscience innate in man. Further, the Vatican Decree pronounces its anathema on both positions, that the one true God cannot be known by the natural light of human reason, and that supernatural revelation is unnecessary. Indeed even to this day, we find Romish Apologetics very fond of admitting, in the first instance with a show of Liberalism, the force of impartial science, in order thereafter all the more surely to make it distrustful of itself, and thus bring it to the altar of the Church. Its efforts are not without astuteness, since our Protestantism, in making the truth a matter of private judgment, is represented as making it relative, and since faith is defined as that conviction, firmly established by the Grace of God, which is realized through the co-operation of reason and will with grace. Certainly we can see in this glorification of Saint Thomas compared to Kant, only a narrowing of science and religion. The anxiety occasioned by Modernism certainly seems now to have as its first effect a further curtailment still of this Catholic science, a species which succeeded in its own way in producing important results (pioneer work in Apologetics).

The new understanding of the nature of the Gospel which was granted to the *Reformation*, necessarily produced at the same time a new understanding of the elements of a relevant proof of its truth which are inherent in it. The person who knows what the Gospel is finds himself thereby delivered from many artificialities of Apologetics, and directed to the way which leads

to the goal of certainty. Luther had a lively sense of where the roots of genuine Apologetics are to be found: in a right estimate of the supreme value which the Gospel offers us, and of the supreme reality which it possesses in Christ—which together constitute an indissoluble unity. Because he knew by experience what faith is, what is meant by saying that we cannot "by exercise of our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ," and how God (Christ, the Word) and Faith "go together," he spoke a new language with regard to faith and knowledge also, telling us that the truth of the Kingdom of God belongs to a sphere "without, within, above and underneath all dialectical apprehension". But this was prophecy and not science, and accordingly we find it everywhere conjoined with the fundamental conceptions of the past, which belong to another order of thought. For example, even the statement last quoted appears in a disputation (XI. i. 1539) defending the thesis of the twofold truth; with regard to which, however, it shows a much firmer grasp than any of the mediaeval compromises between reason and revelation. Further, searching investigation has proved that the famous juxtaposition of "clear grounds of Scripture or Reason," is genuinely mediaeval or Augustinian.

The Dogmatic Theologians of the Churches of the Reformation built rather upon this mediaeval heritage than upon Luther's own ideas, rich as they were in promise for the future. To be sure, their fundamental principle was the absolute supremacy of revelation in the sharpest conceivable form. The only source of knowledge is supernatural revelation, which means for us Holy Scripture. Its Author, the Holy Spirit, produces faith in it in the same supernatural fashion in which He produced it, by His inward testi-

mony to it. In relation to this miracle supernaturally attested, reason has no other function than a purely formal one, to collect and arrange the truths contained in Scripture. The intention of this doctrine is as clear as it is unexceptionable, namely to safeguard the certainty of the saving truth upon which depend life and blessedness. But it is equally clear and incontestable that it fails of its purpose. The sum of the supernatural facts and truths contained in Scripture which are supernaturally attested by the Spirit, is something different from the declaration of the grace of God in Christ which produces faith ; such a displacement of the concept of Faith and Revelation held by the Reformers, and their identification with something that the intellect can produce, even if it can be produced presumably only in a supernatural manner, must in the long run have been as intolerable for faith as it was for knowledge ; it must have given rise both to Pietism and to Rationalism. But the old Protestant Apologetics contained within itself yet another element which was to help towards its dissolution. Alongside of the purely formal function of reason in relation to supernatural revelation of which we have spoken, our old divines recognized another; besides what they called the "organic," that is purely formal, they spoke likewise of a "*catasceuastic*," i.e. preparatory or pedagogic. By this word they meant that inasmuch as reason has a natural, though it be only a dim "inborn knowledge of God," but especially inasmuch as it recognizes the Divine law in conscience, it points us towards and brings us to the Gospel, preparing us to accept it. This is certainly a profound thought; as a matter of fact there can be no understanding of the Gospel, unless it is brought into relation with the law of conscience. No genuinely Christian Apologetic can dispense with this thought. But if its scope is not defined with the

greatest care, if as was increasingly the case with our old Protestant Dogmatists, such natural knowledge, owing chiefly to an inaccurate exegesis of Romans I. 19, II. 15, is appreciated at more than its real value, we come very near to the ancient Catholic view of the relation between faith and knowledge; as is shown especially by the distinction between "mixed articles of faith," established partly by natural reason (also called natural revelation) and partly by supernatural revelation, and "pure" articles derived solely from the latter.

But this state of affairs makes it incumbent upon reason to free itself from the authority of revelation. The period of the domination of faith not thoroughly critical of itself, when consequently knowledge has a wider range assigned to it than it has proved its right to and faith suffers, is followed by that of the DOMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE, imperfectly critical, and consequently with its exact rights undetermined as before, while it does harm to itself as before. The preparation furnished for this domination by the Renaissance, and its establishment on first principles since the time of Descartes, may here be taken for granted. It is sufficient for our purpose to refer to the standpoint of the "Enlightenment" and of Rationalism; there is no need to mention all the separate forms of this type of thought. Nor do we require to dwell on the question how far even religious interests associated with a "layman's faith" which the common man himself could understand, were satisfied by this Rationalism.

It is more important that we should realize that even the complete revolution indicated by Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason" could not in his own case, and still less in that of many of his followers, supply a basis for a relevant Apologetic, because the other condition for such which is equally indispensable, the knowledge of the

nature of religion which we owe to Schleiermacher, was lacking, or as in the case of the Speculative Philosophy was again lost, or at all events not properly made use of. When Hegel teaches that all religious knowledge remains on the plane of pictorial representation, and has to be raised to that of the Absolute Philosophy, we have the domination of knowledge over faith, albeit in a form infinitely superior to and richer in content than that of the "Enlightenment," or of Pre-Kantian Rationalism. Not only so, but knowledge with him in great measure fails to reckon with the Kantian criticism of reason, without having proved it invalid. In the modern consciousness again, under the influence not only of Romanticism but also of Kant himself, the sense for the depths of reality, for the mystery of our existence, has become exceedingly delicate in a multitude of people, and indeed stimulating; only, a strict recognition of the limits of demonstrative knowledge is by no means secured in this way, and the old craving for domination, by which reason was characterized before it was subjected to criticism, is by no means eradicated. This matter was already referred to at the outset, and it will have to be discussed at greater length, when we are dealing with the modern Philosophy of Religion, and in the systematic exposition of Apologetics.

How far can it be said of SCHLEIERMACHER that he explained the nature of faith in a manner that furnishes a basis for a proof of its truth? This question is not answered when we point generally to his scientific exhibition of the nature of religion, of which we have already spoken; on the contrary we must set forth the consequences of his work for the concept of religious truth. Here two points have to be remembered. *For one thing*, Schleiermacher was the first to explain scientifically what sort of truth it is, putting the matter generally,

that we seek to establish—the nature of the truth which the Christian Church at large is interested in proving. The Church at large is by no means concerned to prove all that Dogmatics has ever in any place established or sought to establish. Even if we admit, e.g. that the Chalcedonian formula regarding Christ is an inalienable possession of the Church, for reasons afterwards to be more particularly specified, let us say because it is indispensable as a safeguard against errors, Schleiermacher has made it impossible to assert any longer that it is a truth of Christian faith in the strict sense. Such a truth must have immediate value for Christian experience, the personal religious life of the Christian. This is an indubitable consequence of the nature of religion. But the formula in question does not possess immediate value for the Christian religious life, and that for two reasons. Many have believed on Christ and do believe, without knowing it, and it is foreign to the New Testament at least as a formula. Indeed this has been admitted in principle by every system of Dogmatics since Schleiermacher, however much the admission may have been retracted in regard to particulars, or glossed over. The *second principle* is a consequence of this first one. It is that a truth of faith (or a religious truth) can be proved true, only upon condition that in some form there is experience of its truth. This does not mean that what is valuable must on that account be real, but without appreciation of the value the reality cannot be understood. To continue using the same type of example, the redemption work of Jesus can be proved an actuality only to the person who lets himself be redeemed. We are concerned with a species of certainty which, in Schleiermacher's own words, "is other, but not less, than that which is associated with the objective consciousness". This also follows from the nature of

religion ; and what was previously set forth with reference to the sense in which the ambiguous phrase *Judgment of Value* may legitimately be used, appears now in a specially clear light, and would have to be repeated.

But we must add forthwith ; Schleiermacher does not make full use of the two principles we have mentioned, he only sets them agoing ; which is quite in line with the fact that he personally only starts without settling the discussion of the nature of religion, knowledge of which it is that yields the principles in question as consequences for the proof of its truth. In the first place Christian religious experience, statements of the content of which, according to Schleiermacher, constitute the doctrines of Christianity, required a fixed standard measured by which such experience could prove its *Christian* character. The doctrines of Christianity are far from being " simply statements in propositional form of the states of feeling characteristic of Christian piety ". They are at least statements of states of feeling produced in some fashion by the divine revelation in Christ ; they give expression to a quite definite experience of salvation brought about by revelation. If it should be said, not without reason, that Schleiermacher, so far from denying this, took it for granted, the answer is that in any case it should have been stated with greater explicitness. Then again while Schleiermacher is quite right in his assertion regarding the establishment of such positions, that their truth can be proved only to the person who possesses the experience in question, this statement must be qualified thus : it is not the subjective experience which furnishes the adequate ground of the truth, but the divine revelation as it proves its reality to human need. In a word, all the defects we had to point out in Schleiermacher's conception of religion leave their mark upon his proof

of its truth. But at the same time it is Schleiermacher himself who shows the way to the modifications required: in his definition of our religion he emphasizes its ethical character, and its complete dependence upon Christ as the revelation of God. The next task of necessity is to arrange terms between faith and knowledge—between religious truth and everything else bearing the name of truth, doing justice to the advance marked by Kant. The latter subject will be treated with more precision in the systematic exposition. But even here this defect in Schleiermacher must be emphasized, because the most recent investigations of his theory of principles have reference to it in particular. It is undeniable that while, in the "Discourses" and in his "Ethics," he considers religion as a process of historical development, or prepares the way for this idea, he has not clearly related his view to the same conception of the experience of the Christian Church as an ultimate certainty. This is shown most plainly by a comparison of the first paragraphs of "The Christian Faith" with the "Philosophical Theology" in the "Short Exposition". Starting with the Nature of Religion as Schleiermacher began to apprehend it, we require to arrive at a new determination, resting on first principles, of the relation between faith and knowledge; and then the appeal to Christian experience no longer seems a mere assertion.

This, however, was not the course immediately followed by SCHLEIERMACHER'S direct SUCCESSORS. All viewed with admiration the advance he had made. Practically none escaped his influence—not even those who claimed to use him simply as a bridge across which to pass to firmer ground; while on the other hand, his most unqualified admirers could not altogether get away from the demand we refer to, for a fixed standard and in particular an impregnable stronghold of truth. But

it was as if the innovation had been too daring for his work to be fully understood to begin with, and to be carried on quite in the spirit of the great start that had been made. Instead of this, the Apologetics of the nineteenth century sought at first to come to the rescue with little expedients, attempting to cover over the deficiencies in Schleiermacher by borrowing from the main schools of thought prior to his time. All had their own specific: a little more of the Bible, a little more of the Church Confession, a little more reason, became the watchwords. Taking these watchwords, and looking only at what is most important for our purpose, and not at the separate details of the history, we can readily distinguish three groups, which had many notable representatives last century, and are still active among ourselves. We have to add a fourth, which has to be placed first, because more than any of the others their deliberate intention is to follow Schleiermacher's lead. All they seek to do is to make his position unassailable by emphasizing more strongly the aids we have mentioned.

This last group is the *Mediating Theology*, as it is called. Its adherents are united by their intimate relation to Schleiermacher; in order to make his doctrinal statements more distinctively Christian, and their truth more indisputable, they emphasize the one or the other of the principles which occupied the first place in the proof of the truth prior to Schleiermacher. For example, with the elder Nitzsch it is Holy Scripture, with Twesten it is the History of Dogma and the Confession of the Church, with I. A. Dorner and Martensen it is speculative reason; while A. Schweizer was most anxious to be faithful to Schleiermacher, though with all the modifications of which we speak, demanded as it appeared by the circumstances of the time; and M.

Landerer, less in evidence as an author but exerting an influence upon grateful pupils, had a specially clear sense of the defects of his own theological school, and sought with special acuteness to get over these defects by the use of the methods of the school itself. R. Rothe, on the other hand, occupying a position near akin to that of the theologians we have named, though at the same time standing alone in bold independence, was regarded by some, with his speculation on Christian topics, as an echo of the past and by others as the herald of a better future. The power of the whole school lay in the earnestness combined with freedom, with which they sought to reconcile both the Protestant Churches around them with each other, and the uncurtailed Gospel with all the elements of humane culture, and especially theology with philosophy—a reconciliation illustrated by many-sided harmonious personalities. There is a tendency nowadays to undervalue not only their work in regard to particular doctrines, but also their Apologetic activity, often without knowing it. But it is undeniable that from about the middle of the sixties, the scepticism of the younger generation as to the reliableness of this type of scientific confirmation grew. It was apt to create the impression of being artificial and complicated ; it seemed at once to go too far and not far enough ; the points of support, related to each other to a nicety, did not inspire full confidence as to the adequacy of the foundation they furnished. Connected with this was the fact that there was no evidence of an influence quickening the thought of the people as a whole, genuine and of a fine fibre as the piety of the individual representatives of this theology doubtless was.

As this feeling came to prevail among the younger theologians, more determined leaders for them appeared

on the Right and on the Left. On the Left, we had what is called the *Liberal Theology.* It often preferred to speak of itself as Schleiermacher's Left, emphasizing in its own way its connexion with him quite as much as did his following on the Right of which we have spoken. Their aim was to establish the experiential basis by unreserved recognition of reason. Epistemologically this group falls into those who in manifest dependence upon Hegel make "speculative reason the autonomous standard for religious experience" (Biedermann), and others who, professedly at least, associating themselves with Kant, seek with the help of reason so to work up the material presented by experience as to effect an "adjustment between Christian truth and all the assured results of present-day knowledge" (Lipsius)—a favourite claim for a whole generation. As regards the content of their teaching, the advocates of this theology were distinguished according as they construed the idea of God pantheistically or theistically—a distinction which for the most part indeed followed the epistemological one already referred to. But they were at one in deliberately contrasting the "Christ of history and the ideal Christ," with which went their agreement in the estimate they formed of sin, according to the principle as to the connexion between the two already enunciated by Schleiermacher; although at the same time, in harmony with their view of God, the one party were more seriously concerned as to the recognition of the ideas of guilt, responsibility and freedom. It is hard to tell what was mainly responsible for the decline of the enthusiasm which stood so high for a generation; whether it was appreciation of the violence done to fundamental positions of Christianity on such matters as petitionary prayer and eternal life, at all events in the case of the former type of thinkers, or suspicion as to the lack of a

scientific foundation. The spirit of the age, which had been identified with the view in question, took other directions, and regarded the use of reason here recommended as only a shade less irrational than the method followed in the restored Orthodoxy.

This third school, the *Theological Right* or the *Confessional Theology* as it is called, seeks to combine the experiential basis in the recognition of which it shows its connexion with Schleiermacher, sometimes laying great stress thereupon, with emphatic recognition of the Church's Confession. Here again the differences are great. There was reproduction pure and simple (Philippi), which owed to Schleiermacher scarcely anything beyond the dialectical phraseology; there was finely conceived utilization of the History of Dogma (Thomasius); in the most intimate dependence upon Schleiermacher in regard to method, J. Chr. K. Hofmann develops his Christian experience, at the same time as a Scriptural Theologian evolving from his experience the content of Scripture; while Frank in his *System of Christian Certainty* proves, as he believes upon the basis of universally valid principles, that the whole rich content of the Confession is the necessary presupposition of the experience of regeneration. The roots of such Apologetics reach back not only to the enthusiasm of the War of Independence, and still farther to Pietism, but also to the general attitude of Romanticism. The merit of the whole movement in having directed attention to the rich treasures of the past is clear. Equally obvious is the danger of confusing what was once living with what is still desirable, and then forcing it upon men's minds by other than purely spiritual means. In time the power of the Church Press came to dominate the situation. People were readier to measure the faith of others by the standard of the Confessions than they were to conform

to them in all particulars themselves. And those who personally welcomed the return to the faith of their fathers most heartily, could not always feel unmixed satisfaction with the way in which this faith was made the battle-cry in secular matters as well, and complained that the spiritual movement and its influence upon the world generally were not so living as in the days of their youth.

Was there not then a much simpler way to secure what was best in all these schools, and to avoid their errors? What but Holy Scripture was the source of their best elements? It wrought in them what was vital; it continued to work when everything else in them fell into decay, or sought to assert itself in doubtful disputation. And was it not a defect of Schleiermacher's emphasized by all, that he undervalued Scripture? It is necessary to have seen such obvious views of the *Biblicist* School embodied in a forceful personality like J. T. Beck, in order to understand their full weight: Be disciples of simplicity, the wisdom from above; leave the many fine-spun theories of theology alone, they merely mislead farther and farther from the goal! The thing is to find in Scripture the "organism of truth" which is immanent in it, and it is found by the disciples of simplicity who are prepared to do the will of God. In the simple emphasizing of the primary truth, that the Gospel makes the proof of its truth contingent upon moral conditions, which found expression in the Old Protestant doctrine of First Principles at its best, and which had come to life, aside from the beaten track, in a Spener and J. J. Moser, lay the most valuable contribution of Biblicism to a relevant Apologetic. But it was possible to accept this idea heartily in all its force without being satisfied with the foundation laid by this theological

group, because they made no strict and thoroughgoing examination of the relations between faith and knowledge, and consequently often produced the impression of referring the sceptic to conscience, for what ought properly to have been dealt with at the bar of knowledge. Again, lastly, the organism of Scriptural truth of which they spoke, on closer examination proved to be not immanent in Scripture, but superimposed upon it from an alien source, namely, Theosophy. And a really historical treatment of Scripture was not taken seriously. We have something quite different when such Biblicism does not offer itself as a special Apologetic standpoint, and indeed as the only correct one, but merely gives expression to a living personal dependence upon Scripture. Thus understood, it is as imperishable as Scripture itself, and in its worthy representatives a welcome reminder to all the different schools of theology, that they but state the eternal gospel for their own day. But because one sees this, to refuse to occupy any definite theological standpoint presupposes quite special gifts and guidance.

In reviewing the century after Schleiermacher, perhaps the quickest way of bringing home to our minds the results and the task is by a slight modification of a well-known metaphor. Schleiermacher's fundamental Apologetic principle was a great simplification as compared with the elaborate structures of the past; but his own structure (in regard that is to the Apologetic problem with which we are occupied) was little more than outlined; the building was scarcely formed. So it seemed insecure, unfitted to weather the storms. His successors kept strengthening it with buttresses transferred from the old building. Not only did these differ in style from each other; as they existed they were not in keeping with the foundation laid by Schleiermacher. This foundation itself, on the other hand, was more

secure than either friends or foes imagined. What had to be done was to examine it more carefully, and to finish the building that had been begun, and after that to erect the superstructure above it—or rather to leave over building in the old way altogether a proud structure soaring aloft and exposed to the storm winds: the impregnable forts, those best able to withstand the guns of the enemy, are such as are underground.

It may be said that the inmost motive of the Apologetical work of A. Ritschl points in this direction, although he himself may not have recognized his relation to Schleiermacher as clearly as we of a subsequent day are able to do, and especially although there is much in his positions too which belongs to the past. His dissatisfaction with the schools we have described, as it finds vigorous expression in his biography, may be understood, to put the matter succinctly, as due to the feeling that it was not the best in Schleiermacher which subsequent theology had appropriated, nor had it emended the less good in him in the light of his best. Or, to refer expressly to what we have said regarding Schleiermacher, Ritschl agrees with Schleiermacher in holding that the *content* of the doctrines of Christianity cannot be other than what is capable of being experienced religiously; he differs from him in holding that the *standard* which determines whether a position is distinctively Christian, is not the experience of the individual or even of the Christian Church, but the revelation of God in Christ, which produces saving faith in those whose nature responds thereto. This means those whose nature responds to the completely and distinctively ethical religious blessing offered by this revelation. Ritschl further agrees with Schleiermacher in holding that the *truth* of a religious doctrine cannot be proved, except to the man who has personal experi-

ence of the salvation to which it refers ; he differs from Schleiermacher in holding that the objective *ground* for the truth of such experience is the revelation of God in Christ, as it and the recognition of our most profound ethical needs work in conjunction with, and act upon, each other.

It is easy for the opponents of Ritschl on the right and on the left, the old mediating theologians as well as the Biblicists, to raise the objection at the outset, that Ritschl himself does not make any thoroughgoing application of these fundamental principles of his. This applies to the first, for there is a whole series of important religious doctrines which we fail to find in him, although on his own principles they called for recognition ; and hence there are all his extra demands regarding the doctrine of reconciliation, mysticism, Christology, and Eschatology. At this stage, it is a sufficient answer simply to say that so far, we are not dealing with the application of the fundamental principle, and that all the questions of detail are not yet decided. We are further told that the second fundamental principle is endangered in Ritschl's case by his "pernicious judgments of value," which enabled him to evade the necessity of dealing in a thoroughgoing fashion with the claims of knowledge, by the use of ambiguous phraseology. Here again it must be said in reply that we were dealing solely with Ritschl's intention, not with his success in the execution of it. The easiest way of determining in brief compass whether this intention follows right lines, and whether it is worth while to expend fresh labour upon it, will be to close our survey of the history of the proving of Christianity with the ESSAYS IN APOLOGETICS WHICH HAVE CLAIMED ATTENTION SINCE RITSCHL, AND STAND IN DIRECT OPPOSITION TO HIM.

Since we are dealing with present-day movements,

for the understanding of which we have not yet got the proper historical perspective, it is our duty to exercise reserve. Without forgetting this duty, we are yet able, speaking broadly, to distinguish *four types* of thought. It is the emphatic contention of the first of these, above all things, that Ritschl did not preserve the treasure of the old faith in its fullness, and put the stamp of a new age upon it. Manifestly therefore the theologians of this way of thinking follow in the footsteps of the "Theological Right," subsequent to Schleiermacher, of which we spoke above. The second, on the other hand, looks upon Ritschl as having been too conservative. Its watchword is the psychology and history of religion. But because no amount of ingenuity in the investigation of the facts of religion can take the place of an answer to the question of its truth, the psychology and history in question of necessity once more become a philosophy of religion. Accordingly the characteristic of the *third group* is just their thus addressing themselves to the problem of religious epistemology and metaphysics. Though closely related to the second, they are yet not identical with them. Allowance being made for the altered circumstances of the time, these two together take the place of "Schleiermacher's Left," as it is called. As the third group, which clearly takes its stand upon Post-Kantian speculation, notwithstanding all its rich stores of new material is incapable of silencing the old objections, we can understand the existence of a *fourth*, which promises to show us a completely new way to the goal, never hitherto reached, of a triumphant Christian Apologetic. Naturally, however, and not without cause, the first three groups also claim to be regarded as more than mere continuations of the Pre-Ritschlian essays in Apologetics of which we have spoken. There is a claim to be "modern," put forward

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by no means only by the "Liberal" theologians, but by those of the "Positive" school as well.

This is evident in the case of the *first group*, the name which is adopted by many of its representatives being itself significant—"Modern Theology of the Old Faith" (Theodore Kaftan) and "Modern Positive Theology" (R. Seeberg and his school). "Old Faith" and "Positive Theology" denote their churchly type; "Modern" their avowed intention to proclaim the old faith and positive theology with new tongues to the present generation, with the conviction that the modern consciousness does not simply confront the old faith with a hostile bearing, but offers internal links of connexion with it, which, if properly utilized, bring its riches into currency in greater purity and with more clearness. According to Theodore Kaftan, the characteristics of the modern spirit, which are well warranted in themselves, are autonomy, individualism, personality, and the feeling for reality; and these, when rightly understood, are very closely akin to faith, if only it is the old ever-enduring faith, and not an antiquated theology, that is proclaimed. This distinction between old faith and old theology is possible, if the basal conceptions which are of decisive significance in Kant's Theory of Knowledge are called into requisition for the purposes of modern theology. This principle is visualized when it is applied to matters of decisive import. "The man Jesus of Nazareth stood in a relation to the living God which was absolutely unique; in a relation which cannot be attained by any other individual, because for His personality it was of constitutive significance." On the other hand, statements about Preexistence and the Virgin-Birth, such as appear in the old Dogmatics, logically defined and demanding belief of necessity, are impossible; although Theodore Kaftan personally assents to both these doctrines. It is plain

that such a position approximates closely in principle to that of Ritschl, and that it is well adapted to promote the ends of peace, amid the agitations caused by the fusion of ecclesiastical politics with Dogmatics; and to do so, not by way of compromise, but with the assent of faith itself. Only, others will ask whether the principle is followed out without restriction; especially whether it is made quite clear in what way saving faith in the Revelation of God arises; in other words, whether it does not appear as some form of subjection to an external law imposed on faith. In contradistinction to this "modern theology of the old faith," the "modern positive theology" (R. Seeberg, Gruetzmacher, Beth) aims at setting aside the application of Kant's Criticism, and supposes rather that it can incorporate the spirit and the favourite ideas of the modern consciousness in a direct fashion in a new systematic structure; having in view, as regards content, the craving especially for redemption from the misery of the world, and as regards form, the idea of development. In all this it reminds us of the older Mediation Theology. Hitherto it has made promises rather than fulfilled them. And when it undertakes to carry out its engagements, as in elucidations recently given in outline of the doctrine of the Trinity, a doctrine presented as necessary for salvation, it has not always avoided the danger of being chargeable with some of the ancient heresies.

But the group we speak of, in connexion with Dogmatics of a modern type, one which likes to describe itself as "positive," extends further than the schools dealt with above, which adopt the watchwords that were mentioned. According to the judgment of those who have been noticed, and according to that of the men now to be specified, it includes on the one hand names like Ihmels, Stange, Dunkmann, and Hunzinger, and on the

other hand, Kaehler, Schaeder, and Schlatter. While the latter are obviously more closely allied to the earlier Biblicism than the former, they are nevertheless marked off from that Biblicism by a stricter conception of the task of systematic theology; and it is this which demands that they should be mentioned in the present connexion. Only, as we consider the whole of them, it is very specially necessary to remember that, while they are thus classed together, we must not in any degree detract from the independence of their work as individuals. But it is impossible, in the brief space at our disposal, to characterize that independence. For example, we have the undertaking of Stange to apply a Theory of Knowledge in the investigation of religion, and so to exhibit the latter as the coefficient of all experience; an attempt which shows that he and others, in spite of all the difference that remains, are in close affinity with a party on the "liberal" side, whom we shall soon refer to as the representatives of a new metaphysic. The same line of remark also applies, though the details are quite different, to Schlatter's confidence in the knowledge which man has of God from nature. For our present purpose, it is more important to note that this whole group gives proof of an earnestness, which was long depreciated by the "liberal" and "Ritschlian" schools, in pressing certain demands in common which claim universal respect. Thus we have the demand that the complete objectivity of religious experience should be established. While this demand has reference to the theology which lies at the foundation, there is another which relates to the content of faith: it has to be set forth in its full wealth. In particular, the aspect of reverence in view of the Majesty of God must be included. In this sense we heard from the very first the cry for a "Theocentric theology". Others will have seriously to discuss the

question whether these demands are always adequately fulfilled. However, the recognition of those demands, which always becomes more pressing, may be welcomed as a hopeful sign for the future, one which is more trustworthy in proportion as the "readiness to learn from all parties" is translated in the different quarters into fact. For example, it might be hoped that the thesis of Ihmels on the self-evidencing power of Holy Scripture may lead to a fruitful understanding with those who, while equally assured of the importance of the historical Revelation, have scruples with regard to the hasty identification of it with Holy Scripture, or with Scripture as understood according to the Confession of the Church, and want also to have a more exact statement of the whole question how the precise fact of historical Revelation can awaken a saving faith.

The second of the types of thought referred to is the "*Religio-historic*," which prefers to call itself the "modern" type *par excellence*. It has to be explained how far we can speak of such a school, when the reference is to Apologetics. The objections to Ritschl which they allege are partly the same as those already mentioned, but they are amplified and set in a larger context, where we come upon the watchword of "*the 'religio-historic' method*" by the way. And the objections in question were for the most part first raised by men who had been decidedly influenced by Ritschl. Naturally, in what Ritschl offered, the really valuable was not always formulated in unexceptionable form at the first attempt, while there were other elements that were actually open to attack, and opposition could not but become more pronounced in proportion as it was repressed at the start by the Master's strength of will. To what was open to attack belonged doubtless—not to go into every particular—many elements in his conception of revelation. This

applies even to the isolating of the revelation of God in Jesus, although this feature was originally one of the main reasons for the extent of Ritschl's influence. The question of how this revelation stands related not only to that of the Old Testament, but also to the whole history of religion, had to be faced before long. Then again the inherent necessity of such unique revelation was not explained at all points, as fully as such a far-reaching assertion demanded. In especial, objection was taken to the proof of its historical reality, not only on the ground that Ritschl's use of Scripture, in spite of undeniable instances of marked penetration, was often forced, but also on the general ground that the strictly historical method seemed ruled out of court, so far as a definite circle of facts was concerned. Lastly, the general question of the possibility of such a revelation would have demanded a more deliberate adjustment with reason ; as this was not seen to, the lack of it reacted upon the other points of view of which we have spoken. For all these reasons there came to be many whom Ritschl no longer satisfied in what he provided. Further, he failed to provide much that was desired. Though at first he was credited with showing his strength in confining himself as he did, and people were grateful to him because at last they again had in him an out and out theologian, who was just a theologian and nothing else, this limitation soon became a subject of reproach to him. People now began to miss the feeling for the breadth and fullness of life and thought—the infinitude of the real and its problems—which was a special offence to a generation again predisposed to the sentimental, indeed to Romanticism. Ritschl's definiteness created the impression that he claimed finality, and a final theology was felt to be intolerably narrow. Moreover the younger generation had

grown up into his ideas as into a natural heritage. They had not themselves lived through the stress of the generation before them ; under the pressure of new conditions, they had a livelier realization of what Ritschl could not do to cope directly with these, and aimed at an entirely new solution, without troubling themselves to ask what in him might perhaps have permanent value. Now their great difficulty was the modern consciousness of which we spoke, the distinctive character of which we ventured to sum up in the domination of the idea of evolution. Should there not be a possibility of turning to account and deepening this consciousness, in such a way that Christianity might find in accord with it a firm foothold in the inner life of our day—not a dogmatically narrow Christianity to be sure, such as was even that of Ritschl, but a Christianity quite emancipated from all theological prejudice, and trusting itself absolutely to the current of the new movement ?

It is not the modern consciousness in its application to nature, but in that to history, which is first under consideration here, though indeed it is one of the chief concerns at least of the shrewdest of the investigators who are occupied with the science of religion, to get away from the specific distinction between natural and historical science. Our religion must be treated historically ; the historical method must be applied to it without reservation. And this historical treatment of religion stands in indissoluble connexion with modern " exact " Psychology, which is essentially based on natural science, in its application to religion,—with the " Psychology of Religion ". This Psychology of Religion, combined with the History of Religion, has taught us to go down to the depths, to lay bare the roots, and to see the essence of a religion, not in the complex creations of dogma and worship, but in the mysteries of inward experience—

almost inexpressible movements of the soul—which however can be analysed by exact Psychology into their elements, and apprehended in their connexions with all other mental processes. The Psychology of Religion teaches further that this religious life is self-attested, requires no assumption of supernatural intervention, rather excludes anything of the kind. Finally, this History of Religion associated with the Psychology of Religion shows how closely akin all religions are, when we go down to the psychical foundation of which we speak, how for this reason similar phenomena are found everywhere, so that the artificial barriers between the various religions fall away. For all these reasons together, we find a general Relativism, a profound aversion to the innocent claim that there must be an absolute religion, and that Christianity is the absolute one, in particular to hasty judgments regarding religion as true or false. Thus to put the matter briefly, we have a religious instinct instead of a faith which can be expressed in definite statements, immanence instead of the presupposition of a supernatural power, endless development instead of the idea of an absolute religion, indifference to the declaration which religion makes of its truth. Such are perhaps the fundamental thoughts of the religio-historic standpoint, which indeed on the testimony of its adherents immediately lose a good part of their attractiveness, if an attempt is made to formulate them in anything so crude as the concepts of the old way of thinking.

It is clear how much of the "theological" mode of thought hitherto in vogue is thus disposed of: the value assigned to our religion as possessed of a definite content of assured dogmatic truth, its whole character as supernatural in the midst of this world, its unique grandeur as true, by contrast with what is false in religion. All

this disappears, not only in the sense in which it is understood by the old, or a new, orthodoxy, but even in the sense in which the German Idealistic Philosophy of Religion made use of the idea of the absolute religion and applied it to Christianity. The whole idea of which the past made so much—the absolute religion—belongs to the past; we are incapable of proving *the* truth. It is only by paying this price that theology can continue or again become scientific—only by accepting without reserve the universally valid psychological and historical method with the consequences we have indicated.

The significance of this modern psychology and history of religion is too clear to require express recognition. The new study has shed light upon so many questions hitherto dark that even its most active opponents are beginning to use the light it offers. On the other hand, its extravagances are manifest to all who do not refuse to see them. In regard to the history of religion, this applies especially to the uncritical use made of analogy, which associates things quite dissimilar—think of the Epic of Gilgamesh—and in regard to its psychology, the recklessness with which untested statistical methods are applied. For example, the schedules of a Starbuck regarding conversion ("Psychology of Religion," London, 1899, German Translation, 1909), were certainly not answered by the most competent; and even if they had been, what could they have given us but a number of general tables? Certainly not what is best and deepest in religion, the individual element. Again, necessary as it is in itself to call attention to the immediacy of religious experience, into what a misleading underestimate of religious ideas is it always betraying us. Further there is the ridiculous way in which the significance of "primitive man" is exaggerated, and the obvious danger of looking with favour on

pathological elements, a danger from which even so meritorious an investigator as James did not keep clear; although in another respect, modern Apologetics is indebted to him for a contribution so important as that which we have when he emphasizes the "Will to believe". But here it is another matter which engages our attention. Only too often it has been supposed, or people have unwittingly acted as if it were the case, that the psychology and history of religion could themselves solve the supreme and ultimate questions which come before us in our present connexion, when discussing the grounds of religious certainty. I refer to the questions which we mentioned above, when we described the Religio-historic movement as well as the answer it gives to them. But are the psychology and history of religion, however ingeniously and comprehensively turned to account, able in their own right to find proofs for the truth of religion, and standards for the classification of the various religions? How little the psychology of religion is capable of doing so is very clearly shown by the latest American efforts, which issue in bold naturalism. They tell us that when the lower nerve centres are cut off by the establishment of higher connexions, we have "Christ's coming into the heart," or that the consciousness of sin is the price we have to pay for the bulky and originally awkward distension at the upper end of the spinal cord. The incompetency of the history of religion in respect of the goal in view, is as direct a consequence of the nature of history, as that of the psychology of religion is of the nature of psychology. There is scarcely any department of thought where so much harm has been done as here, by the confusion of the genetic function with the critical —the question of the manner in which something occurs with that of the grounds upon which something is accepted as valid.

Consequently the deeper spirits among the pioneers in regard to the importance assigned to the psychology and history of religion, have not been blind to the fact that, without a criticism of religious knowledge and a new religious metaphysic, these sciences can provide no resting-place, and are of no value in relation to the ultimate question. They share to the full in the anti-supernatural tendency of which we have spoken, and in the refusal to acknowledge any absolute magnitude. But they seek to show that this is far from eradicating all religious or even Christian conviction. To hold that there can be no proof of the absolute religion is not, they tell us, to relinquish our joy in the religion which we actually have. We can see from the comparative history of religion that it is the highest hitherto attained, and we have reasons for holding that it is no illusion. For as a result of the historical development itself, the spirit of man is always arriving at a clearer understanding of the standards by which it measures the treasures of history in a way that is constantly becoming more perfect, though, to be sure, it never reaches finality. In this progressive development, the spirit realizes with ever-increasing clearness that the groping after the infinite, which has its roots in man's inmost being, is no illusion, and that the idea of God is no hallucination, but the supreme reality, "the self-disclosure of the absolute Being".

It is this more profound attitude to the psychology and history of religion which we have characterized as the *third type* of Post-Ritschlian Apologetics. The fact that it is far from being confined to thinkers who find themselves driven to the philosophy of religion, by such dominating influence exerted by the study of its history as we have described, compels us to assign it a place of its own. Indeed, to put the matter quite generally, an

enormous increase of courage in thought, and of trust in the competence of thought to decide the highest questions, is one of the most characteristic signs of the immediate present. This courage and trust are found in many different degrees. But there is a widespread community of feeling which unites philosophers like Eucken with systematic theologians like Luedemann, Troeltsch, Wobbermin, H. H. Wendt, Titius ; but compare too what was said above of the first group. Just at present this feeling is peculiarly lively in the circle which is eager to revive, or more correctly speaking to make use of, the philosophy of Fries [Elzenhaus, Otto, Bousset]. But everywhere along the line we hear the watchword—"Not only back to Kant, but also forward, with Kant as a starting-point, beyond Kant". "There is actual knowledge of the supersensible" ; we have to know the "religious a priori," "religion as an original property of reason." There is enthusiasm here, certainly, and a confidence which is very exhilarating by contrast with a blasé scepticism. But we must get such professions more clearly defined. Those who support Fries against Kant have never yet succeeded in proving their Master the more lucid of the two ; in the end they are always compelled to admit that after all, "knowledge" with them is something quite different from assent-compelling scientific knowledge, and that faith rests upon personal experiences. This type of thought is of importance to us as a reminder that we must not sacrifice the unity of the inner life, and that we must beware of every appearance of "twofold truth". But it has not been able to prove that the line of Apologetics which leads from Schleiermacher to Ritschl can be departed from without loss of clearness, though certainly we of to-day must ourselves traverse the path thus opened up for us, must win it anew, and extend it

for our own needs. As regards even the phrase "religious a priori" (E. Troeltsch), we have not hitherto had any explanation of what it adds to the important truth which we must never lose sight of, that religion is our supreme vocation and the true completion of our nature, and that consequently the capacity for religion is the inmost and deepest endowment of the soul, as we have already shown in detail, when dealing with the question of its origin. So far at least, anything beyond this which the phrase has been supposed to denote has always been to religion what the wooden horse was to the Trojans. For, if the "religious a priori" were to be regarded as equivalent to the theoretical in Kant's sense, it would be all over with the distinctive character of religion: the latter has not the same universal validity and necessity as theoretical knowledge. If, on the other hand, a priori is to be understood in a wider sense as pointing generally to certain laws which are grounded in our nature as spiritual beings, the expression must first be qualified in the most careful manner. All this will be shown in what follows, even if we do not make use of the phrase "religious a priori". Independently of the form of presentation here adopted, and upon a broader philosophical basis, the same standpoint is advocated in Fr. Traub's "Theology and Philosophy" (1910). The ruling idea of this book, which is independent of the author's detailed findings on purely epistemological points, may perhaps be summed up briefly as follows. We do not take positive religion merely as a starting-point, in order thereby to find the proof of its true content and its impregnable certainty in a "religious a priori," which presumes to correct the positive content of real religion at decisive points, and in particular reduces the significance of responsibility, and makes historical revelation a mere figure of speech.

On the contrary, what we do is to investigate the religious conviction of the Christian believer, comparing it with the proofs which are inherent in its distinctive character. In this way we do full justice to what is correct in the idea of an a priori of which we have spoken: we vindicate religious conviction against the objections of overweening knowledge; and at the same time it is by such a course that we show the essential oneness of our mental life. At this point we may also refer to the historical fact, that something very similar to this most modern phase of religious metaphysics was a much-canvassed characteristic of Pre-Ritschlian Apologetics, though never securely established. Of course there were differences in regard to form, for nothing in history ever simply repeats itself, and these earlier efforts lacked the rich clothing provided by our modern science of religion. But alongside of other reasons, it was just the impossibility of proving such religious metaphysics, modest as its claims were, which then made us ready to welcome, and grateful for, the fundamental principle of Ritschl's teaching. And this of course holds good not merely with reference to the Apologetic work of the "liberal" theologians, which is here considered in the first instance, but also as regards the adherents of the "Positive" school alluded to above, who are animated by a similar appreciation of knowledge.

First of all, however, we have something to say about our *fourth* type of thought. This is thoroughly and professedly apologetic, and is moreover so daring and ambitious, that we must go back to the time of Hegel in order to find anything similar. I do not mean that it ought to be compared with Hegelianism in the matter of its content. On the contrary it is, so to speak, the extreme outcome of the view which assigns the primacy

to the will instead of the intellect, in so far reminding us of Schopenhauer, but having quite a different fundamental tendency, and being far more radical. Its complaint is that lack of conviction is the worst ailment of our day, and the relativism of the "religio-historic" method, from which we start, has only gone to spread it and make it still more deeply seated, till it has become a mortal disease. All the old remedies fail. On the one hand, not only is the domination of authoritative faith over knowledge at an end, and on the other hand, not only are the theistic proofs over and done with, and with them every proof of the truth of religion according to the method of universally valid knowledge, even when it takes the cautious form which was last described; but likewise the Apologetic attempted by Ritschl, who founded on Kant and Schleiermacher, is dead. This applies to all its forms. It too is only an untenable compromise, deserving of appreciation because of the emphasis it puts on the character of religion as involving will and feeling, but, because it borrows from Kant, incapable of holding its ground against the claims of knowledge. Only one way, it is said, is still open. The attempt must be made to show that religious thought is not an oddity which we cannot locate, but an integral part of sound thought generally—that *all* truth is in the last resort homogeneous with religious truth. In matters of detail this view admits of being formulated in a variety of ways, and in the immediate past it has been variously formulated. One such is as follows. *All thought*, says K. Heim, is analysis of reality, the ultimate elements of which, however, are simply *creative determinations of the will;* the nature of religion is such a determination of reality like others. The pathway to the realization of this must be cleared by the final uprooting of the ego-myth, by refer-

ring the distinction between Subject and Object to the irreducible fundamental form of all reality,—to the "peculiarity of everything real as signifying a relation". In this direction, it is held, the natural solvent of what was formerly called philosophy points, viz. modern "Empiriocriticism," i.e. the tendency to isolate "pure experience," keeping it free from any interpretation derived from metaphysical ideas, a treatment of it which has been begun by Avenarius and Mach: the work we speak of has to be utilized in the interest of religion. All knowing and willing leads back to an Archimedean point, where discussion ceases and the ultimate categories coincide in one. Here is the point where the distinction between problem and solution must no longer be made; for from that which forms "the Absolute," the ever-enduring present, we are, so to say, quite unable to emerge, so as to place it over against ourselves, and to reflect on it. In it question and answer coincide: the mere starting of a problem here means that we have emerged from it. This emergence is sin. And what of redemption from that sin? From the despair to which the insolubility of the problem of knowledge leads, a situation which is felt as the greatest practical exigency, deliverance is obtained by means of the one empirical fact that is valid beyond the empirical sphere, viz. Jesus Christ. To have faith in Him is, so to say, a requirement of pure reason: here we have the Categorical Imperative, or to speak more precisely, the synthesis of Pure Reason and Practical Reason which was sought by Kant. This foolishness of the Cross is the highest wisdom of the epistemology that has understood itself, and is the power of eternal life. Another way to the same goal is pursued by Fr. Walther. "*All thinking is valuing.*" Our pronouncements originate thus: we define an idea whose value is immediately

clear to us, by means of another idea, regarding whose value for the process of life in our case we have immediate knowledge. When we have done this, we erroneously suppose that we have reached the substantial reality; whereas in truth we have only formulated the value of the factor concerned, with the aid of one or more other ideas or factors of life. We test the correctness of that formulation by our life-experience, which shows us whether the idea in question possesses the value in reality, which we ascribed to it by making our pronouncements. Now if our thinking as a whole is limited from the nature of it to such procedure, religious thinking must no longer be suspected as being of slight value. On the contrary, in that case the so-called objective view of the world is a phantom. The question, Who thinks most acutely? is decided in favour of the religious man, the Christian.

The elation with which this new Apologetic enters the field must justify itself, by its power to convince others that its epistemological basis is tenable, that we have the right to set aside the ego-myth, the distinction between subject and object, and that all thinking is valuing. Its dependence upon ideas belonging to Hindoo philosophy will scarcely induce us Occidentals to change our modes of thought in the way demanded; and the affinity with American Pragmatism, however true it is that the work of these German thinkers is much more profound, will rather create misgiving. For in that aspect of it which falls to be considered here, this Pragmatism (James) is felt by us with ever-increasing consciousness, to be a source of danger to the whole conception of truth. Again, we can see how objections may arise on the ground that such a victory for religion endangers its distinctive nature, as Schleiermacher taught us to realize it. This means that the

expedient proposed strikes us, not as a solution, but as a denial of the difficulties inherent in our present constitution as spiritual beings, difficulties which are intelligible when we look to the nature of religion, as far as is possible if we are not to deny that nature. Consequently, this expedient is rather a prophecy of a higher stage of immediate vision, than a light shed upon our present stage of human knowledge. We prefer, therefore, to continue our investigation of what can be achieved by following the unpretentious road, at the starting-point of which we find the two names we have once again placed side by side, those of Kant and Schleiermacher.

Here agreement is facilitated if ambiguous words are avoided as far as possible. The idea of religious certainty itself, round which naturally enough every species of proof for the truth of religion turns, is understood in a great many ways, being as varied as that proof itself. Thus it is advantageous to recollect in advance the saying of Schleiermacher that, in the sphere we are concerned with, religious certainty is of a different kind from that which is associated with the objective consciousness, yet it is not less ; and that Christian faith is simply the certainty that through the work of Christ, the condition in which one finds he is in need of redemption is brought to an end. Like the idea of certainty, that of universality, which is often used without any proper definition, entails confusion. Universality of some sort is inseparable from every conception of proof ; but when the universality which is claimed in the sphere we have to do with is identified with the kind which may be maintained in the sphere of demonstrative knowledge, or only with the kind asserted in the moral sphere, all hope of agreement is precluded. Or lastly, the general terms, knowing, understanding, conviction,

should not be employed as self-evident in their sense, without full explanation. For example Apologetics cannot renounce the claim that it attains to real knowledge, without renouncing its *raison d'être;* but still it is an entirely open question what sort of knowledge is concerned,—whether it is purely intellectual, valid for theoretical reason, a kind which involves constraint for all who have the faculty of thought, or a species which is dependent in a legitimate way on will and feeling. The continued failure on the part of the numerous theological groups to arrive at a common understanding, springs mainly from the fact that this ambiguity in words which are used without explanation, is not sufficiently attended to. This applies with very special force to the statement last made. How often does one speak of a proof for the idea of God which is universally valid, and then all of a sudden the remark is thrown out that of course it is valid only for one who has a personal interest in the matter.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PROOF OF THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

It is quite impossible, for the reasons already specified, to go behind Schleiermacher and Kant. Every proof of the truth of our religion which fails to do justice to its nature and to the nature of knowledge, is ruled out. The communion with God in the Kingdom of God through Christ, which the Christian experiences, by its whole character renders impossible such a proof as that attempted on the one hand by the Pre-Kantian philosophy, and on the other hand by the Apologetics of Roman Catholicism, or in quite another direction, though as regards the point which is here decisive the two are akin, by early Protestantism—a proof, that is to say, which aims at convincing people of the truth

of the Christian faith *in a manner which involves constraint*, whether it be by grounds of reason, or by enforcing an exalted, miraculous authority which attests the miracle of religion, and always offers it anew—the infallible Church which dispenses salvation, or Holy Scripture which is likewise infallible. Both attempts mistake the real nature of faith as well as of knowledge, whether by way primarily of giving faith the supremacy over knowledge, or knowledge that over faith. How very strange it seems therefore to us, in any of the schools of present-day Apologetics, to come across the sentence standing all by itself—"Faith is intellectual interest in a knowledge of trustworthy witnesses to Christ's Person and Work!" (E. Koenig). Such a sentence appears doubly strange, just where emphasis is laid upon the value of the history, as we seek to do in what follows. But misplaced, and advanced with a false accent, the sentence denotes a complete misunderstanding of religion, and in relation to it we are right in saying that "what must first be proved, is of no value". For at bottom, a conviction valid in the strict sense for every normal intelligence has never been regarded as the aim of a proof for the Truth of Christianity, nor logical demonstration as the means thereto. Further the claim that one should submit to the infallible authority of the Church or of Scripture, has never been able or willing to forego the aid of quite other means.

But the recollection of the nature of our religion brings us to a point equally removed from logical demonstration, and the *rejection* of each and every proof. Christian faith is certainly an immediate experience, but it is yet not so characterless a thing that it must now incur that other objection of which we spoke, that "Faith makes us blessed, therefore it lies". Individual enthusiasts, it is true, are always asserting that their faith is

something so wonderfully certain, proving itself in an exuberance of bliss, that the very idea of a proof proves lack of understanding. But often they very quickly exchange this attitude for one of unstable doubt, and then for quite a bad Apologetic. No, the Christian faith has in its own peculiar nature both the yearning desire for a sure foundation, and the means of satisfying this desire. It has this desire for its own sake as well as in reference to others. For its own sake—for on account of its marvellous content (we refer to the Kingdom of God for sinners, the Kingdom in this world and another), it is "now great and strong, now small and weak," and therefore must be able to satisfy itself as to the soundness of its basis; it must know in whom it believes and why it believes, and how it can stand fast in the presence of opposition, and still gain the victory. This is doubly necessary in our days when old doubts as to whether the invisible may not be a beautiful dream, appear in seductive dress. The idea of auto-suggestion, whose power has been made plainer to us, comes to be a temptation to very many. As against it, what suffices is not the summons to believe, nor even the insinuation that the idea in question is sinful, but only a refutation. The Christian faith needs justification likewise in reference to others. For since it is a stimulus to, and power of love, it must, in order to win others and to advance, be "ready to give an answer to everyone". Under these circumstances it looks very supercilious to seek to dispense with Apologetics, on the plea that it cannot create faith. In truth this disparaging estimate is evidence of ignorance of the actual circumstances. More frequently than is realized by a hasty judgment based upon a surface view of the life of others, many of our contemporaries are on the outlook for a relevant answer to their doubts. At heart there is an inclination on the part of large numbers

towards the Gospel, though they are still incapable of breaking through the walls of prejudice erected in their path by the general consciousness. As this inclination is in many identical with moral earnestness of purpose, it would be nothing less than a dereliction of duty, not to come to their help in the struggle with those prejudices of which we speak (pp. 2 ff.).

But with the *need* for vindication, the *method* for the satisfaction of this demand is likewise given. That is to say, did the decisive grounds lie outside of itself in the sense described above, being independent of it, and valid for everyone however indifferent, we should be abandoning the first principles of our knowledge of the nature of religion. We should have nullified all that has just been indicated as the product of the history till now, and asserted anew a compelling force, whether of reason or of authority, with the result that the unlearned Christians would be at the mercy of the learned, the laity of the priesthood. Should we on the other hand confine ourselves to subjective faith as such, content with the experience as such, then surely there could be no talk of a vindication of it. All therefore that can be done is to bring to consciousness *the objective grounds of subjective faith;* to search for and make clear the groundworks, in fact the elemental active forces, which, as certainly as they can be recognized only in religious experience, are yet not created by such experience, but on the contrary, as something distinguishable therefrom, create, sustain and uphold it. The more thoroughly self-consciousness applies itself to this subject, the clearer will *two things* become. For one thing the Christian is always learning more fully that the most precious realities are the blessings experienced in Christian faith, the forgiveness of sins, power for what is good, hope of perfection. He does not simply experience in his pos-

session of them an undefined feeling of well-being—on the contrary there is often, to begin with, a strong aversion—but the further he advances, the deeper becomes his satisfaction, which cannot be understood except as the realization of his nature, his destiny. All that is valuable to him in other regards, all that he looks upon as the best possession of his inner life, and strives for, above all the knowledge of what is good and submission thereto, attains in his religious experience to greater clearness, and more living reality; and at the same time, the whole of his outward life, which is as full of enigmas as the inner, gains light and power. With respect neither to the outer world nor the inner must he surrender the sense of reality by believing in God; on the contrary, it is only then that these two worlds are harmonized and become to him personally the most precious reality. Only this proof of the truth of our faith, important and indispensable as it is, does not give perfect satisfaction. The more precious to us the experience which has been described is, we ask with the more insistence whether it is finally set free from all suspicion of illusion. Certainly it is a reality, in so far as it is our experience, and that too, as we have just seen, not merely an accidental, subjective experience, but of a kind which is most precious, true, and consistent with our destiny. But is it a *reality*, in the pressing sense of the term in the distinctive sphere of religion, which, as we were convinced, reaches out in virtue of its nature even beyond the highest ideal reality of the subjective experience in question? Have we to do with the ultimate reality in and above the whole world, with the living God? In order to be certain of that, is it sufficient to interpret our experience as a working of God in us, as a self-revelation of the Divine Spirit in our spirit? Or does everything that we

may so interpret and understand, find its ultimate ground in a reality which is distinguishable from our experience, in a manifestation which God makes of Himself in action, i.e. for us Christians in His reality in Jesus Christ? Christ advances the claim to be with unique power and clearness God's presence in our world, full as it is both of motives and of hindrances to faith. It is only with this question that we complete the investigation of the objective grounds which subjective faith meets with, as it analyses its experience. We are concerned with *two distinguishable, yet closely related aspects of that introspective examination of the grounds of faith of which we speak.* But there is still another investigation which belongs to a complete proof. It must be shown *how the results we have named are related to the claims of knowledge* in other directions, more precisely of theoretical intellection. It must at least be pointed out whether there is any opposition or not, whether the two can exist side by side. It is better still if we are able to show that we experience the unity of our mental life, precisely in the fact that the two are complementary to each other.

Manifestly these thoughts bring us again to the point which we had reached in our discussion of the stage in the history of Apologetics represented by Schleiermacher, and of the questions which still remained open, as well as of the answer to them found in Ritschl. For the systematic development of these thoughts, the way opens when we observe that in the Apologetics of the immediate present there prevails on one side far-reaching agreement, but that the *differences* of opinion, which by reason of the importance of the matter, and not merely from theological disputatiousness often become serious oppositions, consist essentially in this that the sides of the proof as we have

named them are not always all expressly recognized, or on the other hand are set in a different relation to each other. For example, the theological Right and the Left are agreed in assigning to theoretical intellection an essentially higher value than is placed upon it by any who in any way range themselves with Ritschl; while Ritschl himself undervalued the task, which in any case presents itself at this point, of coming to a critical understanding with the claims of knowledge. Thus in the introspective examination of the immediate grounds of faith of which we spoke, the representatives of Orthodoxy and of Liberalism once more find themselves at one in this, that they do not expressly, in their treatment of Apologetics, bring the values contained in the Christian Faith—its excellence as it may be known in experience—into relation with the revelation of God in Christ. This holds good in spite of the circumstance that in Dogmatics the "Positive" theologians unquestionably put a high value upon the "facts of salvation," while the "Liberal" relegate them very much to the background. Under these circumstances it is advisable, in order to secure clearness on all sides, to begin with an explicit discussion of the significance of knowledge, and then to carry through that examination of which we spoke, of the grounds of certainty that are inherent in faith itself. Should we begin with the latter, we would be continually interrupted by the charge that all that would be well and good, were it not that in the end the ground is removed from beneath it all by the "self-acting norm of reason".

But it must be urged besides, with regard to the proof as a whole, that in the separate discussions especially with reference to knowledge, there is obviously presupposed a higher stage of general culture; while again the fundamental Protestant principle of the universal

priesthood is not denied, because the immediate grounds of certainty are available for every one. There is no dependence upon science at the critical point; that will be proved step by step in what follows. But it has to be admitted without more ado that our religion must share the fate of ancient Paganism, if it is no longer capable of coming to such an understanding as regards principles with all the elements of contemporary culture. That is the reason, as we showed at the very start, why the Church cannot dispense with Systematic Theology, nor Systematic Theology with Apologetics. And the Church cannot deny the general possibility that such a situation may arise, but by her labours she ought to take good care that the possibility does not become an actuality. The conviction of faith that this will never be the case, may be expressed from the standpoint of faith in these terms: Were that time to come, it would be the end of the world—the Lord's return. This would put an end to the strain upon faith which had become intolerable. On the other hand, if the return did not occur, faith would die from that terrible certainty. However, living faith knows that it is under obligation to prove from its own inmost nature that it is living, among other ways by the labour of thought connected with an Apologetic which changes anew with every new age.

The Significance of Knowledge for the Proof of the Christian Faith

The so-called Theoretical Proof.

The usefulness of this section depends not so much upon our going into every separate detail, as upon our emphasizing with the greatest possible simplicity and clearness the points of view, and presenting them in

systematic form as a unity. And here it is advisable to give the assurance in advance that an opposition between faith and knowledge in the last resort, and therefore their irreconcilability in one and the same consciousness, must on no account be asserted. "Twofold truth" in this sense would be the death alike of faith and knowledge. That is obvious from all that has been said above; but there is an advantage in repeating the statement here once more, obvious as the fact is, for the reason namely, that the immediate purpose of the discussion in this section must be to refute claims of knowledge which are unfounded. For the short hints of our historical survey showed over and over again that faith has always come to grief, whenever knowledge has sought to assert itself as the supreme court in the province of faith; it could not be otherwise, because that necessarily means a denial of the proper nature of faith. But naturally the realization of this in no way decides the right of knowledge to have a say in matters of faith; a dangerous enemy is never overcome by the recognition of his dangerous character. The object of the present investigation therefore must be to prove before the bar of knowledge itself, from its own specific nature, its inadequacy in the province of faith. Only thus can faith be rescued from the clutches of knowledge, but thus it certainly can be rescued, and we are in a position, unperturbed, to realize the grounds of certainty inherent in faith itself. But something else must first be made plain. Our decisive task is certainly to determine the limits of knowledge; only if we applied ourselves immediately thereto, we would fail duly to appreciate the fact that times innumerable in history, knowledge has been appealed to by faith as a highly desirable ally; more than this, that such a relation to knowledge appears to commend itself ever anew. Con-

sequently we must begin by showing in what sense and in what way knowledge has been, and still is, appealed to for a proof of the truth of faith. We point to the circumstance that in this undertaking, as a matter both of fact and of necessity, the goal reached is the opposite of what was intended. Only then is the ground clear for the thought which decides the question: knowledge is essentially unequal to the task demanded of it. This course moreover quite naturally secures the freedom of faith from knowledge, but at the same time also the way is open for showing positively that faith and knowledge are not contradictory, and therefore that they are essentially homogeneous.

There would be a PROOF OF THE TRUTH OF OUR RELIGION THAT WOULD COMPEL ASSENT, were it possible to confirm its content as necessary thought. This idea of rational necessity has, it is true, scarcely ever been understood in the sense that faith can be evoked by such proof alone, being thus *demonstrable* like a truth of mathematics. Indeed to have such confidence in the cogency of the proof would be frankly to deny the religious character of faith. It is for the most part silently taken for granted that there must be other conditions present, if there is to be faith. The opinion has always been something like that expressed by one of the last avowed supporters of this position, in the words—"Faith is willingness to go the way that reason shows" (Bolliger). The objects of faith are established as actual by cogent grounds of thought: whether we have a personal interest in them depends upon other circumstances than the clearness with which we can follow this ratiocinative process. There is a further qualification to which importance attaches. This necessity of thought is not generally affirmed of the *whole content* of faith. Most of those who occupy this ground are content to prove

one specially important aspect of it. Almost always it is proofs of the being of God that we get. When we keep these qualifications in mind, the former referring to the meaning of necessary thought in our connexion, the latter to its compass, it is clear how many of the attempts mentioned in our historical survey had this ideal of a proof of faith by knowledge floating before them, and on the other hand in how many forms and with what varied emphasis it has found expression. They are at one, however, in the intention to secure necessity of thought as a strong ally, who must take upon himself the main burden of the proof. This is a perfectly intelligible intention when one thinks of the power of conviction-compelling knowledge, which beats down all opposition, and its triumphs in other provinces.

And yet, FAITH DESIRES NO SUCH PROOF, BECAUSE IN TRUTH HARM IS THEREBY DONE TO IT. More exactly, as a matter of fact harm has always been done, and must always be done. That this is so *in fact* is most convincingly shown in principle by the most acute and well-considered attempts. For example, Biedermann's idea of God excludes petitionary prayer, guilt and perfection under other conditions of existence, the three points which Strauss had already indicated as those which it is specially difficult for one brought up as a Christian to be compelled to give up. But there are other respects as well, in which the God of that proof is not the God of faith: He loses His personal activity and living personality, which alone can draw our trust to Him. In such attempts, there are, as regards points of detail, great differences which merge into one another, as to how far faith is already swallowed up by knowledge —to use the figure so often employed of the wolf and the lamb—but the ultimate outcome cannot be doubtful. So too, as the content of faith is disturbed, there

is harm done to the essential nature of it. What a difference there was in the period of Hegelianism, for example, between the relation to his God of the man who had knowledge, and that of the one who "had merely faith". On the other hand, the estrangement of science from God has in numberless cases facilitated religious estrangement from Him—a proof certainly of how little personal such religion was. But this whole state of matters is *unavoidable.* Knowledge must reconstruct the objects of faith according to its own points of view, which are foreign to those of faith. It looks in every event for the relation of cause and effect; its ideal is the world conceived absolutely according to the law of causality, not the God of religion. If the world be called God, we have only another name for the world as known; the change in the nature of the connotation of the word affects the idea of God. But not only must such a proceeding do harm to the content of faith; the grounds which are decisive for faith are necessarily altered; its *inmost nature* is violated. The measure of intellectual power must consequently become the measure of piety; religion, at first a matter of speculation in the most exalted sense of the term, must become a matter of speculation in the commonest sense of it. The prospects of religion would rise and fall according to the confidence with which science gives expression to universally valid judgments concerning God. For our psychic powers are not so constituted that the necessity of thinking God and His Kingdom could fail in some way to influence our wills. Long ago it was said, in 2 Clem. XX. 4, that if God immediately granted the reward to religious men, we would immediately transact business, instead of cultivating religion. And the treatment of the same idea in Kant's Critique of Practical Reason is still unrefuted.

Here, however, we reach the point where, as was shown in our survey, the actual capacity of knowledge must be investigated. Though faith may assure us ever so often that it desires no proof from knowledge, such affirmation is worthless, unless KNOWLEDGE ITSELF IS COMPELLED TO ADMIT THAT IT CANNOT FURNISH ANY SUCH PROOF, because it is not at all in a position to express normative judgments regarding faith, either for or against. Otherwise there remains the possibility that knowledge has power and right to eradicate faith, being not simply incapable of furnishing any proof for faith, but being actually capable of furnishing a proof against its right to exist. It is no infrequent occurrence in other connexions, for love to pass away and turn to hatred. At the dissolution of the alliance of a thousand years' standing between faith and knowledge, faith must be assured that knowledge cannot in its own interest turn against it; the proclamation of their old time fellowship, without this guarantee for the future, would be a dangerous undertaking.

In reference to that special task of which we spoke, which for centuries stood in the forefront of work upon our subject, *the theistic proofs*, knowledge itself has long since proclaimed its own incompetence. Here it is sufficient to call to mind a few statements which meet with general acceptance. For one thing, even if we are still quite undecided as to the validity of the proof attempted, there can be no doubt that the so-called theistic proofs, taken together, do not yield the distinctively Christian concept of God. Suppose, for example, that the cosmological proof legitimately reasons from the fact of the world to a supernatural Cause, it is yet the case that this First Cause need not necessarily be thought of as personal. The history of philosophy proves that this is so, even when the teleological proof

is combined with the cosmological, and the First Cause of the world is now designated its End. Again, even if this bare concept is immediately exchanged for the idea of an All-wise and Almighty Creator, assuming that this may be done, where do we get the God who alone is good? If further we believe ourselves justified by the moral argument, by inference, that is, from the moral law in us, in thinking of that creative will of which we speak as the perfectly good, we have still no assurance of His pardoning grace. But not only is the *goal* of the proof not reached, the *way* is impassable. For one thing, the foundation in fact which is indispensable is awanting. For the teleological argument, e.g. the necessary presupposition would be a world of adaptations without any break: who in our day would venture to prove this? In the second place, not only is it impossible to establish premises of such a kind, but the validity of the conclusion itself, namely from facts of experience to what transcends experience is, since Kant, to say the least, no longer universally acknowledged.

Such an attitude to the theistic proofs does not deprive them of all value. Not only were they once of great significance, under conditions of knowledge and opinion that no longer hold good for us—a sort of universal hegemony of Christian Faith in the province of knowledge. Even in our day, they will not fail to make an impression in circles where the necessary self-criticism of reason, the perception of the limits of its capacity, has not yet been applied without reserve. On the whole, however, this will be the case, if they claim to rank not as demonstrative proofs, but as genuine indications of God, the force of which can hardly be overestimated, when they are combined with the recognition of certain needs and obligations of the inner life. This will be acknowledged in its own place in the most unqualified

fashion. In this sense we can rejoice at pronouncements even of a forceful description, which, based as they are on all departments of the real world, on our organization, on nature, on the community, aim at exhibiting the idea of God as the truly rational conclusion of all our reflection (Schlatter). But if we are to speak of proofs, we should be in earnest in using the word in its strict sense. It is not against, but on the contrary in favour of the attitude just assumed towards the so-called theistic proofs, when a well-known Psalm (XIV. 1) applies the name of fools to those who deny God; what is here meant by folly is just the derangement of the highest, the moral and religious faculty, which likes to clothe itself with the pretence of intellectual clearness, and blocks the paths which lead even our thought to the spiritual heights.

It is more difficult *to express in a way that will be generally acceptable the proof of the incompetence* of necessary knowledge *in general* than it is in the matter of the theistic proofs. And yet this is the more important task; for in the present attitude of hostility to our faith, the impossibility of theistic proofs is readily admitted, while only with reluctance do men acknowledge in principle the incompetence of knowledge, because it is felt that to do so does away with the chief objection to faith. But just for that very reason our present task is of importance for faith. The matter is a quite simple one for all those who definitely occupy the standpoint of Kant, as to the fact that our knowledge, in the strict sense of knowledge which compels assent, is confined to the province of experience, and as to the reason why this is the case. At the same time, in view of the present situation, an overhasty appeal to Kant is not advisable. For it is easy to understand that objection should be taken to individual positions of his, which readily ob-

scures the fact that the fundamental principle of the Kantian thought meets with recognition far beyond the circle of his conscious adherents ; and the same effect is produced by the controversy as to the proper interpretation of Kant's philosophy generally. This applies to all who, along with their acceptance of and emphasis upon the results of theoretical knowledge, especially in the province of natural science, hold fast by some sort of personal convictions, which have quite a different origin and quite a different ground for the validity they claim, namely in needs and experiences of the inner life, especially in the moral sphere. The truth that man harbours within his mind the most pronounced contradictions finds in our day a very noteworthy illustration at this very point. It is frequently more creditable to the individual's heart than to his head, and there goes along with it an eager yearning for a time when it will be easier for all once again to satisfy themselves regarding such fundamental questions. (Cf., e.g. as an effective appeal of this sort, Karl Koenig : "Between Head and Soul ".) Turning away from these self-contradictory phases, we can easily see that those who consciously acknowledge the inherent limitations of the knowledge that compels assent, give expression to this admission of theirs in very varied form. Some like to emphasize such limitations in the very sphere in which in other respects the unlimited triumphs of such knowledge are constantly being illustrated afresh. They draw attention to the fact that the concepts which we take for granted, power, matter, atom, motion, conceal within themselves a multitude of insoluble problems ; and that the causal explanation, even when it is most complete, and the laws that govern it are clearest, and most fruitful for the increase of our knowledge, always depends upon artificial isolation of individual parts of events, and holds good only

upon condition of such abstraction. Others lay bare the difficulties inherent in the concept of evolution, which is generally employed so carelessly.

Those who lay stress upon the distinction between natural science and historical, precisely in their ultimate and most important presuppositions, go deeper in principle than either. (Cf. among others Windelband and Rickert.) But even when such investigations are consciously combined into a philosophical theory of knowledge, the utmost diversity prevails, not only as to the way in which terms are used, but also as to the subject-matter; and this often conceals the large measure of agreement in the ground idea. Making allowance for the many qualifications required, and also for the varying degrees in which individual exponents seriously grapple with the problem, this idea may perhaps be expressed as follows: knowledge which compels assent, and the non-recognition of which excludes one from the circle of sound-thinking people, is the comprehension of the perceptible object presented to human consciousness, by the given Forms of this consciousness. With this insight into the nature of the knowledge that compels assent, there is inseparably conjoined insight into its limits which cannot be got over, because they have their grounds in its very nature: namely that the perceptible object on the one hand and the Forms of consciousness on the other, are the indispensable presupposition of such knowledge. That insight is independent of a definite Theory of Knowledge, and also of the expressions just used,—this distinction of perceptible object and Forms of consciousness. It can be conjoined with any Theory of Knowledge, if it is not rather a species of Metaphysic, asserting, that is, "the knowableness of what is transcendent in the material sense," and so of God and His relation to the world. But that

this claim is unfounded can be shown in a manner that is of force for all, without the acceptance of a definite Theory of Knowledge, simply by working out our general proposition; except when, as has been attempted of late, the whole presupposition would be denied that there is knowledge that compels assent, in the sense just described, and consequently the question could not be asked how far that knowledge reaches. But that presupposition is for ever established by the fact of Mathematics, and in the long run no one will be inclined in face of a basal point which is so clear, to commit himself to propositions so vague as the statement, e.g. that "all knowledge is embedded in descriptions of feeling and will". For at all events such propositions, from their vagueness, are as unfitted as possible to serve as a starting-point for any kind of understanding on the fundamental question with which we are occupied.

The conclusion which we draw from the foregoing signifies nothing more nor less than THE FREEDOM OF FAITH as against knowledge. Thus it does away with a suspicion which makes every proof, even the best, ineffectual; the suspicion, namely, that such proof may ultimately be shown by assent-compelling knowledge to be untenable—nullified by irrefutable objections. From this fear, which in our province works like a paralysing fear of death, we are free. Our argument that harm is done to faith by proofs that compel assent, might still be contradicted by a long-established experience to the contrary. And the position we have reached, that such a proof of faith is not to be expected on account of the nature of knowledge itself, might after all be at first looked upon as a loss: this explains the regret felt by many at the disappearance at least of the theistic proofs. But now the gain secured at the cost of all such apparent losses is clear and unmistakable—

the actual freedom of faith. For there follows immediately, from what we have learned of the limits inherent in the nature of the knowledge which compels assent, together with the certainty that there is no proof of faith based upon necessary grounds of knowledge, and just as necessarily, the certainty that there can be no such proof against faith. And that upon two grounds. Knowledge has no right to assert that there is no reality at all, apart from the reality accessible to her. Nor has she any right to assert that the real which she knows under the conditions we have indicated, is known in all the aspects of its reality. Rather the full reservation is made that there may be another reality besides, which is accessible in a different manner; and that the reality which is known under the conditions indicated, may also be apprehended in other aspects of its actual nature, not by theoretical intellection in the sense of assent-compelling knowledge, but by the activity of the willing and feeling mind in faith. Or if you will, it would be, not by theoretical but by practical reason; but here the precise definition of these expressions must be held entirely in reserve, if fresh misunderstandings are not to arise. Both propositions mentioned above are of the utmost importance for Christian faith. The former has reference more to its content in general: God and His love to us. The latter has reference more to the separate relations of Christian faith to the real world, which is the object of assent-compelling knowledge, e.g. in regard to the question of the hearing of prayer or of guilt. But it is of set purpose that these sentences are expressed in this particular form, instead of its being merely asserted in some way that assent-compelling knowledge leaves room for another handling of the same subjects, namely under the point of view of teleology, of value, or as one may put it. Though that

is doubtless correct, it is yet the case that such a mode of speech, unless it be safeguarded with the utmost precision in a way that would be impossible at this point, readily excites suspicion in the mind of the religious person; as if it were sought to satisfy him, a man that lives upon reality and is driven to despair without it, by means of some kind of beautiful illusion. That is excluded from the outset, in the case of the expressions we have chosen.

It *is possible*, certainly, to contest the positions we have laid down. It is possible to disregard the limitations of which we speak, and assert that our knowledge is absolute knowledge as regards its scope and nature, that it includes all that is real, and that too in the whole range of its reality. But this cannot be asserted upon the basis of assent-compelling knowledge, but only by disregarding its nature, by an act of will, or rather of groundless caprice. The will claims that knowledge should be absolute, because knowledge is regarded as the highest good. In order to be able to maintain that ideal of knowledge, which is honoured without sufficient basis in knowledge itself, men prefer to renounce a truth which cannot possibly be acknowledged except by a decision of the will. It is not, as they make believe, that the intellect stands in opposition to the will and feeling. On the contrary, intellectual confusion goes hand in hand with a vague feeling and an indefinite but strong decision of the will, that there must be nothing but what can be known in the manner affirmed.

But is not the only scientific attitude to our problem at least one of *Scepticism?* Though now it is often called Agnosticism, a protest must be entered against this in the interest of clearness as to the fact. Otherwise there results the appearance that knowledge compelled us to

renounce every ultimate conviction ; whereas genuine Agnosticism, as the name implies, only says that a theory of the universe cannot be reached on grounds of assent-compelling knowledge, but leaves it an open question whether the possibility still remains of arriving at the goal along another path. Thus real Agnosticism, where knowledge and its opposite are understood in the strict and clear sense, that of assent-compelling knowledge, can be a true ally of faith ; as the striking confessions e.g. of a Romanes may show. The natural meaning of Scepticism, on the other hand, is just that of which we speak, which is often wrongly given to Agnosticism, and it is here that Scepticism is in the wrong. It does not disclaim assurance on grounds which compel assent, but upon the baseless assumption that nothing can be real except what can be proved by necessary thought. It has no right in the name of knowledge to deny the possibility that there may be truth, assurance of which is possible only by the way of personal experience, personal testing. The view with which we are here dealing finds its counterpart in the figure of the traveller, whose only means of escape, at the abyss where there is no possibility of turning back, lies in a daring leap, but who first demands a proof that the leap will be successful. He thus deprives himself of the means of escape. He demands more than in the nature of the circumstances he has any right to demand. He is not content to recognize that the leap for escape is not one that necessarily fails, but that it can be successful only for him who makes the venture (cf. "Ethics," p. 93 ff.).

The significance for the further progress of the proof of the truth of our religion which belongs to what we have learned of the limits inherent in assent-compelling knowledge is self-evident. If this proof now concerns

itself with reasons for faith, based not upon such knowledge, but upon experiences of value, it no longer labours under the reproach of having turned such a method of proof to account in mere caprice, because another, alone conclusive in questions of truth, is not available. On the contrary, it is in a position of equality, or, as Christians are convinced, of superiority, as compared with every proof that can be offered for ultimate conviction in general, or a theory of the universe. For in no case can a theory of the universe be established by the method of assent-compelling knowledge; it can vindicate itself either not at all, or upon grounds which have their roots in the volitional or emotional functions of the human spirit. For the same reason the opposition offered by those theories of the universe which are antagonistic to Christian Faith loses its chief support. It was always based, not so much upon their furnishing something deeper and greater in content, as upon the claim that they alone have as their foundation necessary conclusions from unassailable premises, whereas Christianity, on the other hand, is mere faith, unfounded opinion. *Now however faith meets faith.* Even materialism is a form of faith, and so is the more fashionable monism, however often this necessary inference is rejected by those who admit the premises. This does not at all mean that faith must be unfounded opinion, but it is as far from being true of Christianity as of any other faith. Now that we have shattered the illusion that on the one side there is knowledge and on the other only faith, the question may be discussed in a relevant manner, by comparison of the one faith with the other, which has the better foundation. But it is as well to emphasize clearly that in setting belief and knowledge alongside of each other, hitherto we have been concerned with principles, the full bearings

of which we cannot see till we come to apply them to the individual difficult problems of Christian faith, e.g. the Personality of God, the hearing of prayer, the historicity of Jesus. And some concluding sentences regarding faith and knowledge find their place more appropriately after the exposition of the grounds for the truth of faith which are inherent in itself. Here there was nothing more than the simplest possible exposition of the fundamental idea. In reference thereto it may be said that, when once the comprehension of the nature of assent-compelling knowledge, which no one can dispute without putting himself outside of the circle of sound-thinking beings, has permeated the general consciousness, it will no longer pass for sound thought to assert, that ultimate conviction of the ground and purpose of reality, or a man's theory of the universe, or religion, is determined by assent-compelling knowledge. Certainly a man is still far, at this point, from having been won for the Christian view; but a prejudice has been overcome which still prevents many among us from putting Christian truth to any serious test. In this respect the philosophical work of E. Adickes, e.g., may prove to be effective.

The proof that there is no contradiction between faith and knowledge will be more convincing, in proportion as there is combined with it the *positive proof of their homogeneousness.* And here it is more important and more difficult to show that knowledge cannot exist without faith, than to show that faith cannot exist without knowledge. The latter point is proved by life itself. It cannot occur to the religious man to deal seriously with his faith in this world, while he renounces all knowledge. The demand for life is stronger than the strongest secret aversion of faith to knowledge; at all events this is the case in our ethical religion. But

the other point too is undeniable, that knowledge is nothing without faith. Natural and historical sciences rest in the last resort on presuppositions which are conditioned by practice, being derived from the impulse which leads man to seek life. But it is religious faith that gives the right to form them. In this consists the unity of faith and knowledge, or more precisely their conformity. For on no account should faith and knowledge be identified now, in contradiction to all that has been set forth in the preceding pages, and to the destruction of both of them. But certainly their conformity is manifested by what has been said, a unity of a teleological nature, in reference to their object, as also to the subjective functions. "The whole world is a means for the realization of the Divine purpose with the world, and theoretical knowledge is a means for the purposes of the Christian's personal life." However, the more detailed treatment of this idea lies beyond the point where Apologetics stops. (Cf. among others Reischle and Fr. Traub at the passage quoted.) Here we may close by pointing to the fact that the most general presuppositions for a proof, in the sense indicated and now to be explained more fully, are gaining recognition in larger circles; although the inferences are by no means drawn from them in all cases, which we shall enforce later. The more clearly the conception of science is grasped, the less, in the long run, can people fail to discover the limit to its domination, as supplied by itself, or the presence of other mental powers of the strongest kind; and the less can the desire, ineradicable in the human mind that is not distorted, for an ultimate conviction regarding the world as a unity, be suppressed. But in this way "Christianity establishes itself in its true home, like a conqueror that had been driven out"; and the question of "our relation to the ultimate

mystery, which makes us at once so little and so great" (Dilthey), can again be asserted to involve the most important of all our tasks.

Proof of the Faith from Grounds Inherent in Itself

The so-called Practical Proof

This proof must first of all be safeguarded against a twofold misunderstanding. On the one hand it claims to be an actual vindication on an adequate basis. When we said that there can be no logical proof, we did not mean that every one may now believe whatever he chooses, according to his own sweet will. On the contrary, in an open comparison of the various theories of the universe, the Christian faith must prove its superiority. Let each faith prove its right to exist, and the palm be awarded to the best grounded! In other words, we are dealing with real knowledge (pp. 138 ff.) of the grounds of faith which are good; only they are different grounds from those which have been rejected up to this point, in the interest both of faith and knowledge. We are dealing with an objective balancing of the one against the other; the end aimed at is a universal judgment. But the words "objective" and "universal" are to be understood here, as we realized in advance at the close of the historical survey, in the definite sense which alone they can bear when we move in the plane of the personal life. In this there can never be logical demonstration, in the sense of a proof as explained above; because it is possible to object to the whole method, though, as we saw, certainly not on grounds of assent-compelling knowledge. This misunderstanding is constantly checking the progress of Apologetics. The attempt is made

to prove too little or too much,—in truth to prove the faith in a manner of which the case does not admit.

The two main points, however, with which we are now concerned, have already been emphasized above (pp. 105 f.). When subjective faith examines itself with its objective grounds in view, it comes upon a two-sided foundation, though it is always becoming more clear that the two sides are essentially of a piece—its value as capable of being experienced, and the ultimate basis in reality of this experience, which is found in historical revelation. We say that this foundation has two sides, but that the two are of a piece, for the reasons already given. They are of a piece because it would be absurd to speak of the value of faith as something which is merely the object of our thought, but not capable of being experienced as actual; and on the other hand, to speak of a reality which was demonstrable, without our being able and ready to experience it in the value it possesses. But the foundation has two sides, because we have to inquire of set purpose, whether the value which is capable of being experienced has reality accruing to it, in the full sense which the man of faith must insist on unless he is to renounce that faith itself. Fuller particulars regarding the relation of these two aspects of the matter will naturally be given, as the latter are dealt with in detail.

Introspective Examination of the Value of our Faith as it is Capable of being Experienced.

This is just as much a matter for every simple Christian who seeks assurance regarding his faith, as it is for methodical scientific investigation. In both forms it is possible and necessary, for the reasons which have often been given. We Protestants are firmly persuaded that in the inner sanctuary of his religious assurance, no one

must be dependent upon the learned; every one must be capable of personal assurance upon the final and decisive grounds. But at the same time on account of its spiritual character and universal claim, our religion cannot refuse to come to an understanding on a scientific basis with all the powers of our mental life. For both forms of this introspective examination of personal experience of which we speak, there is required the capacity to put ourselves into the place of another, for the purpose of comparison with another's experience. Even the Christian whose education is of the simplest, can and must exercise this capacity, because he lives with others who do not share his faith; on the other hand, the educated cannot and must not so practise it, as to occupy a position of neutrality regarding the different values; for in our province that is impossible and wrong. To remember this latter truth is often of direct practical value, especially in the days of youth. In order to be quite impartial, people forget that conviction is never reached at all except through personal, active interest. Consequently they are as sceptical with reference to the rudiments of conviction already in existence in themselves, as they are just to excess with reference to the opposing convictions of others, and thus deprive themselves of the real impartiality proper to the matter in hand; instead of rising to a personal conviction on the basis of this impartiality, many sink into a weak indecision.

It is difficult to summarize briefly the immediate personal conviction of even the simplest Christian, regarding the value of his faith as capable of being experienced, because the life subjected to such observation is so infinitely rich and varied. Every earnest pastor knows in what a multiplicity of forms it appears, provided that he is guided by "the love that is willing to

see". Perhaps it appears in thoughts like these—"What a treasure my faith is to me! How happy I am in spite of all anxieties! This or that course would have been unbearable for me, without the support of the Christian hope! What if there were no forgiveness? What if the power of God were not mighty in our weakness?" Generally speaking, such utterances are the more valuable, the less frequently and the more hesitatingly they are in evidence. But they are all neither more nor less than evidences of the experienced value of the Christian faith. Further, it is easy to refer the separate traits back to the nature of our religion as before discussed. We spoke of personal communion with God, and on the basis of this with our neighbour, in love, a communion which now takes place in time, but will one day be perfected in glory. In such communion, and certainly in all cases, in spite of there being no minimizing, but full recognition, of sin, the Christian experiences for himself as well as in reference to the whole community, a life the most valuable that he can conceive, the realization of all that in his inmost being he is compelled to regard as his true life, his destiny. On all sides he has the opportunity of comparing this possession of his with that of others: even to the remotest village the modern consciousness penetrates, at least by means of the press. And so too he can compare what he possesses as a Christian, with any valuable experience, apart from that which he may call his own; or with what he formerly experienced and suffered, before the light of eternal truth fell upon him as it now does. But all that possession of others, like his own, seems to him but as poverty, when he compares it with what he himself possesses as a Christian, however unscientific may be the form of such comparison. Frequently the comparison becomes a temptation to him; but the temptation

leads to the strengthening of his position: he becomes more assured and richer in his faith. Peculiar interest attaches, for example, to the way in which even simple folks settle for themselves the siren claims of Neo-Buddhism. They instinctively understand the superiority of the positive Christian ideal of love over such a negative one, and the inseparable connexion between Christian love to our neighbours, and the love of God in Christ. Further, their experience of the Christian faith convinces them in as immediate a fashion of its universality, and inspires them to put this conviction of theirs to the test among all with whom they are brought into contact, however different they may be, and indeed in a far wider circle to interest themselves in the evangelization of the world.

In *scientific* Apologetics, this personal conviction of the Christian regarding the value of his faith can and must be developed in METHODICAL FASHION. So far as it is here a matter chiefly of conscious comparison with the other ultimate values of our life as spiritual beings, we must have a standard for such an undertaking. In order to secure such a standard and to establish it on all sides, we should have to engage in a comprehensive preliminary study, which would move in the sphere of psychology, as well as of a general view of history. In particular we would have to avoid in this undertaking the improper course pursued by scholars of old, that of consulting only scientific evidence. Our watchword would have to be a very great amount of "lay theology"; unintentional confessions of notable personalities who are placed in the full current of "worldly life," would have to be copiously utilized. In that case all the cloudiness of the doctrinaire, which suggests that we have to deal with a very complicated subject, is most certain to disappear; power measures itself with power, and in real

life it is manifest where the truth lies. For our purpose, it is sufficient to attempt to state, with as little dependence as possible upon any definite technical phraseology, the result of this work. The deepest and at the same time the most far-reaching struggle of our life as spiritual beings is found to be the struggle for inward *harmony and freedom.* (The two manifestly go together, but are yet quite distinguishable.) However far a man may be from this ideal in his own life, still the judgments he instinctively passes upon others show that he acknowledges it. In a child, for example, we regard it as a natural and lovable trait, that his interest should quickly turn from one thing to a quite different, and that he should let himself be engrossed by external impressions in their profusion; in a grown man we very soon set it down as simply childish, if there is no comprehensive life-plan subordinating every separate interest to itself, and if the external world is not inwardly appropriated, and by an act of will changed to his inner world, so that it can be said of his feeling and willing, not to mention his thinking and judging,—"That is he," "That is his own". Indeed even the joy of which we speak in the child's many-sidedness and nervous alertness, is unalloyed, and full of hope for the future, only when at the same time we notice something of the deep collectedness and independence—the "simplicity" in the highest sense—which is a prophecy and guarantee of a genuine man. A more comprehensive exposition would naturally have to bring before us not merely the individual man, but also humanity. (Cf. J. Kaftan: "Truth of Religion".)

In what way now are this inner harmony and freedom, in which we must recognize our true nature and destiny, realized? Manifestly in those spiritual activities which we described when dealing with the distinctive character of the religious process (pp. 59 ff.). A man who

lives merely the life given him by nature, knows nothing of the harmony and freedom of which we speak; he attains to it in the scientific, the artistic and the moral life, in the world of the true, the beautiful and the good: he attains to it in its perfection, as we Christians are convinced, in living faith in God. What we have got to do is to justify this conviction, by comparing the extent to which inner harmony and freedom are reached along these various roads. How great a measure of the highest satisfaction is secured for example by a life devoted to *Science*, may be realized from the self-consciousness of a Kepler, as it finds expression in the preface to his "Harmony of the World". At the same time we have evidence there that there is for him a still deeper satisfaction for his inmost being, namely the religious; since he praises God for his scientific attainment. Knowledge does not completely fill any human soul; the purer knowledge is, the less personal is it, because it is the more objective. Accordingly the man of mere knowledge never creates in others at least, the impression that the destiny of man is completely realized in him. This glory maybe accorded rather to the *artist;* but the greatest is often the readiest to confess that "brush and chisel still not the heart" (Michael Angelo); and while as an artist he lives in unbroken harmony, unaware of any flaws in his art, as a complete man he often suddenly realizes the distressful antagonism between the "good" and the "beautiful," after having perhaps for a long time identified them. To come to an understanding with regard to the æsthetic ideal in life, is very specially necessary in our time, in which so many extol in an extravagant fashion the consolation and the strength which are derived from the beautiful. In personal submission to an unconditional imperative, there opens out a new pathway to harmony and freedom. This way may be taken

not merely by a few elect persons, as is the case with science and art, but by all, even the ignorant and those who are wearing themselves out in the struggle for daily bread. Besides, it shows itself to be the surer and higher way. For the inner harmony of which we speak must be attained by personal achievement; and what is so personal as the act of the will which masters itself, and in so doing frees itself from the power which restricts all beings? Only, the good will is limited. This is true not only of its effects upon the world: the limitations inherent in its own nature weigh more heavily upon it, and would do so, were it only a matter of limitation, were there no guilt which it cannot forgive itself, or make good by any effort, because effort itself is hindered by guilt. Thus harmony and freedom remain a dream, unless God, the truly good, is forgiving and so regenerating love; in other words, unless the moral life makes itself one with *religion*, that is faith in the living God. "The heart finds no rest until it rests in God," and in such rest, it finds both the stimulus to and the strength for eternal activity. The value of the religious life surpasses that of the other higher interests of life, and perfects them. This only becomes plainer, when in recent investigations men of striking acumen (Cohen, Natorp) set free morality from all inexact, overhasty connexion with religion, and think they may dispense with the latter.

In this line of thought, we have purposely refrained from touching upon a series of thoughts which occur by the way; our intention was merely to give in brief outline a living impression of the value of faith. We now refer to some at least of the particulars. A more complete discussion of the value which the ethical, in distinction from the intellectual and the æsthetic, possesses for the attainment of that inner harmony and freedom

of which we speak, would naturally have to compare the various ethical ideals with each other, and to estimate their value for our inner life, as shown by such comparison. It would have to make clear how the Christian ideal escapes the one-sidednesses of the others, combines their merits, and in both respects surpasses them, and helps forward the individual as well as the race in the realization of their destiny (cf. "Ethics," pp. 57 ff.). In the second place, we should have to test likewise the value of the different religions, in the relation with which we are dealing. But especially it would be a rewarding subject of investigation to consider in what relation the ethical ideal in general stands to religious faith, or speaking generally to an ultimate conviction in reference to the real, a theory of the universe, that is; and how the different ethical ideals correspond to different ultimate convictions (cf. "Ethics," pp. 95 ff.). Thus there grows up in the mind of the Christian Church, as she reflects upon the value of her faith, a firm confidence against the suspicion of which we spoke, that "faith makes us blessed, therefore it lies"; for the specially close connexion between the ethical and the religious in Christianity protects against the reproach of indolence, the inclination to hypnotise oneself by means of devout dreams of blessedness: whoever is disposed to such indulgence must certainly look for another faith than the Christian, in the Protestant interpretation of it.

As a result of all this, there can be no doubt that the self-analysis of our faith finds in the value which it has, and of which we can assure ourselves by clear reflection, a proof of its truth which we have every right to call objective, in the sense in which we can rationally speak of objective grounds in this department, where logical demonstration is impossible. Indeed in the ab-

stract, there is no objection to be made, even if one wants to call this objective ground, these transcendent norms, universal as they are when rightly understood, the religious a priori. Only the position would have to be defined with the utmost precision. But is it the case that by this expedient, or by our whole discussion up to this point, the entire question as to the truth of our religion is settled, that the unique hunger which the pious person feels for reality is allayed, and that his unique anxiety lest he be deceiving himself is overcome? Is there not ambiguity in that word reality, precisely in the sphere which we are concerned with? Is subjective experience, which doubtless is not merely subjective reality, objective reality in the sense meant by religion? What does it mean more precisely, and what conclusion have we to form regarding it? In short, to state the crucial matter in advance, and meanwhile without giving particulars, we must now ask explicitly, whether all this that we have ventured to assert regarding the value of faith as capable of being experienced, must not be referred to revelation, and that too the revelation of God in history, in order to secure a reliable foundation and a sure basis.

Introspective Examination of the Reality of our Faith in God, a Reality open to Experience and Resting on Divine Revelation.

The following statement deals throughout with the most important religious and theological controversies of the day, and its power to carry conviction depends essentially upon the clearness with which the fundamental ideas are set forth at the outset in their proper order. In the first place, we must put the matter, which is a complicated one, as simply as possible, i.e. we

must examine the various answers to the question which now inevitably arises, namely: Is the preceding all that can be attained, by way of a proof of the truth of our religion? This question receives a great variety of answers, but they all resolve themselves in the last resort into a simple "yes" or "no". In the second place, if, as is here maintained, the question cannot be answered in the affirmative, but must be answered in the negative, we have to show the necessity for such an answer, and consequently the religious significance of revelation. In the third place, we are confronted by the task of defining with greater precision the idea of such a revelation, should it be proved indispensable. In the fourth place, so many historical objections are raised against this conception of which we speak, that we cannot be satisfied by the most precise delineation of it, any more than by the proof of its necessity, unless we are able to establish the historical reality of the revelation which we affirm. Finally, what we now say regarding revelation, and what we said above regarding the value of faith as capable of being experienced, must be combined, correlated, and exhibited as constituting in their unity the basis of our certainty.

THE FIRST QUESTION, whether THE PROOF OF THE TRUTH OF OUR RELIGION is definitively closed with the preceding discussion, is at present answered by the one party with an affirmative, as decided as the negative of the other side. But very different reasons are given for both answers, and both are given at one time in a spirit of confidence and joy, at another hesitatingly and under pressure of necessity; while again on this point, there is no simple line of demarcation between theological parties and schools which in other respects hang together. Under these circumstances it is at all events noteworthy, that the negative answer is without doubt

the one that would have been given by the Christian Church in the earliest days, as well as by all the classical representatives of our religion hitherto ; and that even the other religions hold a similar view regarding themselves. For to recall only the latter point, they all claim to rest upon revelation ; finding the main proof of their truth in the self-manifestation of the Deity, in which He gives evidence of His power (pp. 52 ff.). But Jesus with unique emphasis declared Himself to be the Son of the Father, who alone knows the Father and alone reveals Him to others (Matt. xi. 27 ff.). Moreover, He himself designated the recognition of this special claim of His as revelation, and saw in it the foundation of His Church (Matt. xvi. 17). That the same holds good of Paul, John, and the other witnesses of the earliest days, needs no proof. The great men of a later date took this conviction over as an inheritance ; indeed it was by means of it that they became great, since they discovered it anew for their own time. Each of them did so, in his own way, but they were all at one in regard to the decisive point. The most convincing proof that here we have to do with something that must not be lost, is just the case of those who, in opposition to the tendencies of their time and their own fundamental principles in other directions, saw the anchor of their religious certainty in revelation—in Christ. In this connexion, alongside of a Luther's constant appeal to Jesus, in whom we see, hear and touch the Father, —an appeal to the man Jesus, in whom we have "the sensible God,"—Schleiermacher is particularly instructive ; owing to the fact that he broke with the prejudice of his day, with which we shall presently become acquainted, though himself still under its influence, and made faith dependent upon Christ. It was his going back to that position which made him the restorer of a

definite faith, sure of itself. We have already shown in our historical survey, that the fault of his successors was that this guiding principle of his was infringed upon in many ways, or was not developed and applied as the time and circumstances required; and that its emphatic reassertion is the foundation of Ritschl's great influence, while at the same time it explains the abandonment of him which speedily followed. But ere we examine this feeling, which has been widely prevalent throughout history and has continued right down to our own day, having indeed once again become well-nigh all-powerful, we observe that it is not merely the heroes of Christianity who have grounded their faith upon Christ as a precious treasure. What is true of them has been, and has continued to be, equally true of innumerable unknown persons, who as "The quiet in the land,"[1] in small groups or as active members of the great church-communions, have made and are making the certainty of their faith the object of conscious reflection, without ever knowing or applying the form of scientific investigation. Often the most impressive instances of this are met with in pastoral work, even in the simplest congregation. "Looking to Christ" and "relying on Him" occur in every key. What we have to reckon with is always the simple, but inexhaustible thought, that the proof of the reality of those religious experiences which are valuable, is that religious faith possesses a sure foundation in Jesus Christ, "the same yesterday, to-day and for ever"; and the hymns of Christendom never cease to celebrate this power which belongs to Him, though a Gerhardt and a Gellert may differ greatly as to how they give expression to it (cf. pp. 91 ff.).

[1 A name assumed by certain circles of German Pietists, cf. Ps. xxxv. 20.—Translator's note.]

But if we leave out of account the very earliest days of Christian history, *the contrary opinion* has never been without its advocates, since Greek thought allied itself with the gospel. To the Greeks, indeed, as Paul already testifies, not only was the content of the gospel foolishness, but also the fact that it sought to pass for history and not simply as eternal truth; they rejected not only the preaching of grace, but also the preaching of the Crucified as the basis of faith in the grace of God. Still it is only since the time of the Enlightenment that this view has become a power to reckon with in the world of Christian thought. In many quarters it still adopts as its watchword Lessing's phrase, "Contingent truths of history cannot prove eternal truths of reason". Lessing means that this is impossible, not only because there can never be a logical demonstration of the facts of history, but because the historical and the eternal do not admit of comparison. German Idealistic Philosophy had a deeper understanding than Lessing both of the nature of religious experience, and of the value of history for the comprehension of the highest truth. But in spite of this, that statement of his became one of its ruling principles, which it never tired of enlarging upon; in all its phases talking of it coolly, as of something obvious, as well as with restrained yearning; and making all sorts of applications of it, now with direct reference to religion, at another time with reference rather to ethics, and at another quite generally. The philosophers vie with each other in their expressions of high reverence for Christ. One (Kant) speaks of Him as being the first to exhibit in His own person the idea of a humanity well-pleasing to God, and at the same time as doing this with a perfection attained by no one else. Another (Hegel) tells us that He introduced the religion of sonship to God and union with Him, by the

personal embodiment of it in Himself; even that in His consciousness, at once human and divine, the Absolute attains to self-consciousness. But notwithstanding, the last word is always to this effect: the idea of a humanity well-pleasing to God, of man's sonship to God, and of the incarnation of God, is in its truth independent of the historical introduction, realization, embodiment, to which reference has been made. Christ is the way, but when He has brought us to the goal, we may and should forget the way: He Himself in His humility would ask us to do so, were He still amongst us. Certainty belongs in the last resort only to the personal experience of the true relation to God, the divine sonship; and this experience does not depend upon a permanently indispensable working of Jesus upon us. "It is the metaphysical and not the historical which confers blessedness" (Fichte).

To be sure, this present generation, which is proud to call itself "historical," again possesses a more accurate conception both of the nature of inner experience and of the meaning of history for that experience, than those philosophers of whom we speak had in comparison to Lessing. It knows, as we have seen, neither eternal truths nor contingent events of history, in the sense at first attached to these words; no truths of reason with regard to God, virtue and immortality, in reference to whose inherent and unassailable certainty, a historical personality could have only the value of being the first to make them known, and whose individual experiences and actions would therefore stand in no necessary connexion with his message. Even these highest truths, as held by German Idealism with bold self-assurance, can no longer be taken for granted by our present-day consciousness. It has, moreover, in events within its own experience, felt the power of personalities, as being

more than the accidental transmitters of ideas. There is thus a widespread disposition to assign as high a value to history as possible. But not only is this weakened by tendencies of the modern consciousness which are of quite a contrary nature : one thing at least is regarded as a truism, that the relation to Christ which makes Him actually the foundation of faith is possible only at the unscientific stage, when the consciousness is not yet clear as to itself. This is essentially due in part to the objection to an absolute as well as to a supernatural entity, which we emphasized as characteristic of the modern theory of evolution (pp. 9 ff., 124 ff.). But that depreciation of history is shared too by those representatives of thorough mental culture in our day, who, as respects their private convictions, come closest in their way to Christianity, and keep furthest aloof from the vulgar self-consciousness of many who rank as modern. For example, W. Dilthey shows with the greatest acumen what circumstances "gave rise to the modern theories of religion, as held not merely by the philosophers, but also by Protestant theology," circumstances "which the Middle Ages, and indeed Luther himself, had not understood". He refers to the "new scientific spirit". "To be filled with it means to-day to have life"; whereas formerly it had seemed that "all human science, compared to Divine Revelation, was entirely uncertain, and flitting like shadows." Now "historical study and dogma fall into the background, behind the aim of finding the essential connexion of all our interests with the life of feeling": "Christianity establishes itself in its true home, like a conqueror of the world who had sustained a reverse". That is the position which we have all along adopted in the foregoing, when we said that the nature of religion had to be defined, and then the grounds of religion, when it was

properly understood, had to be established. And accordingly, we also have from Dilthey statements about faith and knowledge, which approximate very closely to those made above. But now the critical question is whether this "falling into the background" alleged with reference to "historical study," if it is assumed in the degree and in the sense which he contemplates, is not inferred from a process of observation which has not been completed; and whether the history of the Origin of Christianity is not for all time one of the constituent parts of "its true home"; although certainly we do not include in this all that was formerly regarded as belonging to that history, nor do we subscribe to the terms in which the history was formerly defined. For the revolution of modern study is indeed as enormous as it is undeniable. In theology especially, in the sixties of last century in particular, the watchword of the school which denies the permanent and essential significance of history for establishing the certainty of our faith, was the differentiation of the Christian redemptive principle from the person of the Redeemer, or the "Christ of faith" from the "Jesus of history". At present its main advocates are the Religio-historic School (p. 121 ff.), who at the same time, as their essential characteristic absolutely requires, aim at as comprehensive and profound an estimate as possible of Jesus as a historical personality; just as they seek to investigate thoroughly the peculiar nature of immediate religious experience. This often acts prejudicially to clearness in the statement of the question; the more so because on this point the historians are fond of assuming the rôle of systematic theologians, without accurately defining the terms they make use of. In such incursions into a foreign province, there is just as much talk of the great value of history for faith, as there is of the necessity for "a little more metaphysics,"

along with the immediate certainty of experience, in order to lay a sure foundation for faith. But when the Systematic Theologian seeks to give a clear exposition of, and to prove, the former affirmation, he meets with opposition just as certainly as when he asks for a more precise definition of the latter. These vital questions of contemporary research in religion will occupy us in the following section, where we deal with the essential necessity of historical revelation.

Now it is a remarkable fact that the opponent of this "Religio-historic School," which loves to speak of itself as "Positive," is in our question largely at one with its habitual antagonist. The two are united against those who consciously seek to turn the historical revelation to account as the basis of religious certainty. To be sure, on the part of the Theological Right, there is no lack of emphasis on the "facts of salvation". It is in their attitude to these that they find their own superiority, and the distinguishing mark of genuine religious faith. Only, these facts of salvation, the Incarnation, the Death on the cross, the Resurrection, the Ascension, the descent of the Holy Spirit and the Second Coming, are confined exclusively, in the case of the theology in question, to the Dogmatic System itself: they are acts in the history of the God-man which constitutes the content of faith; but they find no place in Apologetics; they do not come into consideration as a basis for faith. For example, Luthardt and Cremer were at one in this with Lipsius and Otto Pfleiderer against Ritschl. The question here is not at all whether the so-called "facts of salvation" have the place and significance assigned to them. Suppose that they have in every particular and in every respect, the possibility still remains that they are of importance likewise under the other point of view indi-

cated, viz. in Apologetics. Our subject of inquiry, therefore, is whether indifference to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, in the course of the proof of the truth of our religion, is well-founded—whether such proof can be brought to a conclusive issue, without understanding and emphasising this revelation as the basis of faith. That is the SECOND point to which we directed attention as demanding consideration; and we believe ourselves able to answer the question which we have just put in the negative, and to prove THE INNER NECESSITY OF THE REVELATION.

First of all, to speak quite generally, we have a very simple line of argument, which applies to both sets of those who are opposed to taking Revelation as a basis. The hunger for reality, which is the very soul of religion, and which came before us right at the commencement of our attempt to understand its nature, is not satisfied by the circumstance that religious experiences are of value to us, however high the value we may put upon them. Fichte's bold statement that worth is actuality, value is reality, the valuable is real, is calculated to impress, stimulate and fascinate; indeed in opposition to a superficial view of reality, we may claim for it a large measure of validity precisely on Christian grounds, but all the same it is not the immovable ground of truth. We must recall to mind the relation of religion to the other main departments of man's psychic life (pp. 59 ff.). In their case we take our stand upon our own inward experience, and rightly so: we have no reason to go past it. What does the artist care for reality, apart from that of his own feeling—his powers of imagination? In the esthetic sphere, beauty and truth coincide. The man who is making an effort in the ethical sphere, knows himself under obligation to his ideal, whatever

the reality may be. Even pure science, that which deals with assent-compelling knowledge, does not transcend the scientific consciousness, especially when it understands its own nature. Religion, on the contrary, as we have often had to point out, stands or falls with the reality of God, as real not only in our consciousness. But there are many who, under the influence of very crass conceptions of reality, have grave doubts about this Reality. Now there is no question that the experience of the value of our faith of which we spoke (pp. 164 ff.), is for Christian conviction an experience of God, an effect of the Supreme Reality. This is true especially of that experience at its highest stage, where the religious is inseparably one with the ethical. Consequently it is a grand truth, corroborated by experience, to which a recent philosopher gives utterance when he says, "In the categorical imperative we experience a categorical indicative, an instinctive assurance that it will work, come what may, something of an infinite power which holds its own in spite of all the weakness of our moral effort, an inward pledge which proves for us that the yearning for the existence of God has a reality corresponding to it" (Class).

Only the more such positions are in line with our own wishes, the readier we are to see one side of the truth affirmed by ourselves find expression in them, the more does the obligation rest upon us of *putting their validity as a proof to the test.* First of all let us consider the application of these principles in the so-called Liberal Theology. We are absolutely at one with what is said by Class, so far as it gives clear expression to the truth that the religious man cannot construe his experience except as a presence of God in him, an effect wrought by God, a revelation on the part of God. In

emphasizing this truth, present-day thought, particularly of the religio-historic type, unquestionably marks an advance. It is right in consciously directing attention to the immediacy of the religious life, and in so doing it finds that the pious person views his experience as the work of God in man. Indeed it sees here an advance over the standpoint which we ourselves advocate, namely that there is an essential relation between our religious life and Christ as the basis of its certainty. It must be against this position that the party cry is raised—"Back to God! Only the Almighty and Eternal can be my Redeemer" (Sulze). This party cry, we are told, will mark a new victory of faith in God in our generation. Now we are ready to grant that faith in Christ can be so preached as to obscure faith in God. This is a danger which we wish to keep in mind. But our present concern is with the clearness and consistency of the position urged on the other side. We must consider carefully what is meant by saying, "Faith is God's work in me, something produced by Him". Here manifestly only two methods of Divine revelation can come into consideration, one within the human soul, another, as we show more carefully afterwards, in history. The opponents with whom we are here dealing affirm the former to the exclusion of the latter. More accurately, they regard the former as the decisive one, although they are ready, as we immediately proceed to show in detail, to assign the latter a significance as great as possible alongside of the former. We on the other hand are far from denying the inward revelation; and this likewise will appear plainly, in the course of our exposition. What meaning could faith or trust, particularly in our religion, have, without immediate experience of the Divine inworking? But however high the estimate we put upon this, we affirm that without

support in the historical revelation, there is lacking a foundation indispensable for assurance.

A simple explanation will show why we make this assertion. When the statement that faith is the work of God, is understood as meaning that the experience of the religious man is simply the form of the Divine inworking, all the variations of our subjective experience become variations of the Divine inworking; whereas we wish to be assured of this as something lying outside of and transcending the variations of our subjective experience. Consequently we fail to secure the very thing we are concerned to have at this point of our investigation. We are in quest of a sure basis for our experience, and we receive the assurance that we have experience of God in the variations of it. The following consideration places this conclusion still further past dispute. The position that faith is the work of God, as hitherto understood, namely as meaning that God's self-manifestation is the objective basis of our subjective experience, and that the two are distinguished only in our thought of them, is no accurate expression for the experience of the religious man. Such a statement fails to give due recognition to the personality either of God or of man, reduces the relation of God and man to a relation between the Infinite and the finite, and so infringes upon the conclusion forced upon us when dealing with the nature of religion. If we must abide by this, and maintain that the relation between God and man must be viewed as really personal, and that the truth that faith is the work of God does not exclude human responsibility, we cannot escape the admission that the mystical inworking of God of which we speak, cannot furnish an impregnable foundation for certainty, but that on the contrary there is expected of the human subject what that inworking cannot achieve

for him. We should have to create by our trust something that is not present in such Divine inworking. In any case such must be our finding, if we presuppose the distinctively Christian view of God. To be sure, where the Christian faith in God the Father is understood as meaning that "in our sense of guilt we trace God's own pardoning love, that we must work, and in doing so must become guilty; but this sense of guilt we experience as a supernatural gift of God's grace" (Weinel), or where the essence of religion generally is transformed into "an experiencing of man's true nature," "an uplifting to personality" (Johannes Müller), the indefinite idea that the Infinite in us effects this uplifting, enabling us to experience the supernatural gift of grace referred to, may be sufficient. But this is not the well-marked genuine Christian view of God, who "in grace and truth deals with us, entering into personal fellowship with the struggling soul, as the Living and Righteous God". We cannot understand faith in this God as a mystical presence of God in us, without being compelled to forego the certainty we have of faith. This certainty shines for us "in the face of Jesus Christ". If the experience of Christian Faith is conceived and acknowledged more precisely as in the quotations last given, the need for a more thorough establishment of the truth of it only becomes the clearer.

It is thought by the adherents of the *so-called Positive Theology* that they are able to establish this certainty ever so much more clearly, and that their basis is vastly superior to any that we have described. They feel themselves grounded upon the firmest conceivable foundation: the Holy Spirit of God gives them an assurance regarding their faith, that is unassailable. Now there can be no doubt that the Christian refers his religious certainty to the working of the Holy Spirit. But in our present

connexion the question is, how does this certainty arise, and how can it be re-established amid all its fluctuations; that is to say, on what grounds are we able to recognize the work of the Holy Spirit? It is of very little value here simply to point out how wonderfully mysterious His work always is; we have proof of this in the fact that such is the line taken by the Vatican decree regarding faith and revelation. But further, this course involves consequences of which no Protestant can approve. If the Holy Spirit is adduced at the wrong place, and consequently in an illegitimate manner, as the ground of religious certainty, there is danger both of intellectualism and of fanaticism. For if we fail to show how saving faith may be produced by the facts of salvation, or more accurately, by the one great fact of Jesus Christ, working upon us as a revelation of God which we can experience, it is almost impossible to avoid the appearance that we have to assume by a decision of the will, the truth of those facts of salvation. Thereupon the claim is made that supernatural certainty is inwrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit. The latter position is just as certainly fanaticism as the former is intellectualism. In all schools of present-day theology, it would be agreed that such a preaching of the gospel produces such effects. Unanimity might be reached in this way, because preaching in the different schools, in the measure in which it is real preaching, rises superior to what may be false in their theological presuppositions. But should there be an inclination, as there is so apt to be, to see in all this only artificial difficulties, and to confine one's self to the position that, nevertheless, the work of the Holy Spirit is demonstrable in its bliss-conferring and regenerating effects, we should have to insist that we are not now speaking about that at all; we are long past that point. What we would like to know is, how the truth of such

experiences can be proved, even if doubt should be cast upon them. Nothing accordingly is gained for our quite definite question by referring to the Holy Spirit. We are no further forward than we were, when we refused to be satisfied by the appeal to God's mystical inworking in the human soul. At this point the Orthodox Apologetics shows no essential superiority to the Liberal. But we may find that the former is superior, if the work of the Holy Spirit is rather declared to be inseparable from the Word of God, or to speak more precisely, to attest the Word of God in Scripture to our hearts; not of course in the sense of the old doctrine of the witness of the Holy Spirit to the inspired writing, but in the sense that the content of Scripture is made sure (cf. Ihmels). In fact this modification of the idea comes close to what we assert in the sequel, when we make use of the history contained in Revelation, so as to get a proof for the truth of our religion. But only if we prosecute the aim with clearness of purpose and without reserve, following the course which is afterwards described, would it be possible to make real progress, and to supply a refutation of the objections put forward above.

But we would be unfair to our opponents, if we brought our account of their views to a close in this way, without having directed attention emphatically to the fact, that they themselves are at pains to cover the deficit which showed itself on their summing up of inward revelation, by a loan from the revelation in history. Our own intention is to show the decisive importance of the latter revelation. Our opponents to the Right and to the Left refuse to assign such significance to it, in proving the truth of religion, that is in establishing the certainty possessed by faith. But they are willing to let it rank as an auxiliary, and to make as much use of it as possible. In

particular in the theological school of our day, where the distinction between the Redemptive Principle and the Person of the Redeemer is still held as a fundamental, we find the tendency, in spite of this separation, to emphasize the latter as strongly as possible. The relation of Principle to Person, we are told, is not an external and temporary one ; it is essential and permanent. We have to do not with the communication of a doctrine, but with " the first self-embodiment of the Principle in a Person of cosmical significance. The Person is the source, the archetype which guarantees the efficacy of the redemptive Principle " (Biedermann). The last expression betrays most clearly the instability and inconsistency of such positions, and also the reason of this instability and inconsistency. They are insecure and inconsistent, for " guarantee " and " archetype " are two different things, and it does not make them one to mention them together. If Jesus be our Archetype, our task is to model ourselves upon Him, roused and supported by Him certainly, but essentially in virtue of the inherent majesty of the Archetype, which means of the principle ; and the principle is in the last resort independent of the Person, though He is an illustration of it. If on the other hand, He *guarantees* our being formed in His image, assuring its success, His work is of another order, deeper and more effectual than is within the power of an Archetype. His work then is what we have always maintained it to be, of such a nature that in it we are able to experience the work of God ; that is, He works as a Revelation of God. In that case, to be sure, the relation of principle and Person is an essential and permanent one, but consistency is sacrificed. For the claim made for this standpoint, as compared with the ecclesiastical tradition, is that the Person of the Redeemer is no longer encrusted with affirmations which it is believed are applicable to no one in history, as temporally

conditioned; but have been attributed to Him, only through a confusion between Person and principle, which is intelligible in the sphere of naïve thinking. And yet here again an affirmation is made regarding the Person, which in truth, must apply only to the principle. If on the other hand it is clearly a case of hyperboles, and inconsistent ones at that, the reason for such hyperboles is unmistakable; it is the ineradicable demand which faith makes, that what it values most highly must be real, the yearning to pass from the realm of what it wishes into the world of what is.

Still more finely conceived in regard to matters of detail, are the attempts made, under the influence of the modern historical study of religion, to substantiate religious certainty, the basis of which is found in principle in inward experience, by assigning to Jesus a supreme value, without however transcending the limit of which we have been speaking. Jesus is no longer spoken of as an Archetype or Example. That seems too lowly a rôle for Him, and too moralistic. There is too little of the immediacy of religion about it. He is regarded as the religious genius, virtuoso, and hero, and it is believed that this enables us to assign to Him the power we desiderate. These watchwords, which are prinked out with the utmost brilliance of colour, and made to glow with the utmost warmth of feeling, tell on our generation, disciplined as it is in the art of entering with lively appreciation into the sentiments of others. The first of these words emphasizes originality in matters religious in its inmost nature, the second the manifestation of it in all the events of the individual life, while the third and most popular of the three gives direct expression to the power of influencing others. The applications in detail are variations of Carlyle's theme of "heartfelt, prostrate admiration; submission fervent, boundless, before a noblest

godlike Form of Man". In this sense Jesus is hailed as "the Hero of the undertaking which He names the Kingdom of God, the Dayspring of real manhood" (Johannes Müller). The idea of the Hero as thus employed, is a very appropriate one, because on the one hand it gives clear expression to the unquestionable significance of history for our own religious life—there is a great advance here upon Lessing's "contingent truths of history"—but on the other hand it still leaves our own religious life in the last resort independent of history. Indeed this high estimate of Jesus is compatible with the acknowledgment that "it does not matter who points us to the way of deliverance so that we may become men" (J. Müller). For such an estimate of Jesus, the term *Hero* fits like a glove. Heroes occupy the borderland between history and myth, and exercise an influence in the dim light which reigns there, not as historical personalities, but as symbols embodying ideas. This whole modern attitude to Jesus indicates an enrichment of outlook, but inasmuch as it does not rise beyond the ground idea that certainty rests upon inward experience of God, it is open to the criticism which we had to pass upon that idea. In spite of all asseverations, we cannot see how we are to attain to assured confidence in the good and gracious God. No skill or enthusiasm in presentation can get us away from the alternative which we always see confronting us. In the inward experience of God, His revelation in Jesus is either a "constitutive moment" or it is not. Consequently there is religious certainty or there is not, according as Jesus belongs to the foundation of our faith or not. With joy and gratitude we welcome such voices as these, "We find God in Christ; we have an inalienable possession in faith in Him". But it is not from mere contentiousness, but on account of the greatness of the issues involved, that we are compelled

to insist that such vital statements must be carried to their logical conclusions, and that it does not do to say in the same breath, "We are utterly tired of Christology"; for such statements are a Christology, even if on fuller examination it should prove to be very different from that of Chalcedon. Similarly, it is not permissible, when the conception of Hero, applied to Jesus, is criticized as above, to reply that this word is not used in the strict sense, though there had previously been a very definite application of it. In view of such lack of certainty, we can readily understand how it is that large numbers, belonging to very different ways of thinking in regard to other theological matters, are driven to *other supports* in order to reach it. We take it for granted that the gravity of the problem is generally realized, and that most people are too accurate in their thinking to see the perfection of wisdom in the friendly counsel, "Only let a man be bold in his faith, and he will presently become assured of it"—a counsel of equal value with the proposal that the drowning man should get out of the water. It is easy to see what can still be seriously urged apart from these feeble measures. There is nothing left but to make another appeal to the method of proof, by means of some sort of necessary knowledge, which we have already rejected. In other words, we must revert somehow to the proofs for the being of God, though we may apply them in a new way.

The one group of them, of course, the ontological, the cosmological and the teleological, cannot seriously come into view, at least in the old forms, for the reasons given; more significance apparently is thought to belong to the *moral.* Reference has already been made in our own argument, to the inner connexion between recognition of a moral ideal, and an ultimate conviction regarding the ground and purpose of the world. To be

sure, in a complex civilization, we not infrequently find heroes in the field of moral effort deliberately renouncing every such conviction. A Christian must look upon it as highly unchristian to make little of those men. But just now we are not concerned with such individual cases, or even in the first instance with the general question whether man is capable of moral effort without faith in God. For this question, raised prematurely, is destructive both of morality and of religion : the former loses its full earnestness, the latter its full blessedness ; an unmoral type of religion and an irreligious type of morality arise only too readily. The question rather is whether there is a necessary connexion of thought between the moral ideal and faith—conviction regarding the Ultimate Reality, the ground and purpose of the world. Unquestionably there is such a connexion. We feel that there is an intolerable contradiction in submitting ourselves to the absolute command of the good, and at the same time abjuring the faith that the good is the supreme purpose of the world ; in other words, that the ground and purpose of the world is good, and not indifferent as regards what is good. Nor is this all. There is an unmistakable connexion between the particular idea held concerning what is good, and the conception entertained regarding this ultimate Reality. The all-gracious indulgent Father of the period of Illuminism, corresponds with the content of the ethical ideal then current, and the not overstrict construction put upon the moral imperative. To the principle that what gives pleasure is right, there is properly speaking no corresponding ethical conception of God ; the esthetic notion of a world-harmony, where the Infinite realizes itself and the dark shades contribute to the beauty of the whole, suffices. It is specially clear how the Christian commandment of love to God and our neighbour,

and the Christian idea of God as pardoning, holy love, correspond to each other; for otherwise the obstacles, not only those which occur in the course of the world's progress, but guilt, the greatest of evils, could not be overcome. In such considerations is found the deepest sense of the so-called moral theistic proof. It is no proof, because the presupposition is not logically demonstrable, namely the recognition of the moral law. But it brings home to our consciousness in a living way, that there is a rational connexion between the idea of God who wills the good, and the act of our own will of which we speak. This does not mean that happiness and morality will be balanced, if not on earth then in a future existence; that would be the false and rash identification of "Thou shalt" with "God wills it," of which we have spoken. All that we affirm is that there is a rational connexion between the one and the other. This is a truth by no means to be despised. Under certain circumstances it can be of great value, amid the difficulties attendant upon the growth of the personality. Living personal faith in God, let us say, may have got lost in the conflict with doubt, along with the other treasures of childhood; but the man who has lost his faith is kept from cutting himself adrift from what is good, as well as from religion, by the knowledge, or it may be the vague feeling, that to do so would mean self-annihilation. In such darkness of soul, many have found in that interrelation of ideas of which we spoke, a last slight bond uniting their better self with God in His goodness.

But this consideration does not bring us the certainty at which we are aiming in this present connexion. I refer to the correspondence which we have found to exist, between the moral ideal and a judgment regarding the ground and purpose of the world, and in particular between the Christian moral law with its unconditional

"Thou shalt," and its imposing content, on the one hand, and the Christian idea of God as forgiving, holy love, on the other. There is no certainty for us here, because, although we can easily see the correspondence between the two ideas, we have no means of proving the moral right to affirm it. For in any case the moral imperative of which we speak, taken by itself, only brings us to the righteousness of God, and that very circumstance makes it the despair of the conscientious person. If again, in order to escape this, he thinks of the righteous God as pardoning love (on his own initiative, without warrant in an actual revelation of God) he does so at the cost of surrendering the majesty of the moral law. He plays fast and loose with goodness and with God. He lets his imagination go as it pleases in an illegitimate way. We received impressive warning of this twofold danger, despair on the one hand and vain self-justification on the other, from our Reformers, who saw that there is only one way of escape, namely Christ; that is, an actual drawing near on the part of God. But let us suppose that the hypothesis or postulate of God's existence is warranted on ethical grounds. The religious man's need would still be unsatisfied; for his concern is not with what he establishes as coherent thought, and on this basis postulates as actual, but with the Reality of God, as a reality that proves itself active on his behalf. His whole desire is, to get away from the forbidden ground of his own inner experiences, as being merely personal experiences, and to have the right on good grounds to understand them as an actual communication of the living God to him.

The school which for the while is enjoying extensive popularity, does not always enter far enough into the rationale of pious experience, as just described,—the school referred to in our historical survey of Apologetics,

when we used the catch-words, "Religious a priori," or the "Reintroduction of Metaphysics into Theology" (pp. 131 ff.). An objection on the ground of principle was there stated, and now it will be possible to clear up some matters of detail in connection with our present argument. The attractiveness of the essays alluded to is unquestionably due in the first instance to their very vagueness. Expressions like taking the theistic proofs as the rational basis, appear to be far too rough-hewn; but all really comes at last to this, that the Absolute, considered as the ground and purpose of the whole process of the universe, gets to be viewed as having the force of one of the truths of reason, and so establishes the truth of faith in God as taught by Christianity. At this point we shall not ask again whether we can speak seriously in this case of rational necessity; nor yet whether, supposing we could do so, the real existence of God, in the sense understood by religion, is certainly one and the same thing with the necessity of the idea of God for our thought. But meanwhile, this, we can say, has always become plainer to us, that the pale abstraction which they adduce, when they speak of the ultimate ground and goal of the whole process of the universe, differs *toto cœlo* from the Christian conception of God, with its richness of content; and it is just the elements of the latter conception which are of chief importance for Christian piety, that are wanting to it,—we refer here only to prayer, responsibility, forgiveness of sin, eternal life. Now if the "New Metaphysic," as we have it, say, in Troeltsch, develops into a Metaphysic of Freedom, and frankly accepts "Dualism," convictions of the kind, in proportion as they are of value to us, and touch a deeply sympathetic chord, are hardly to be called universal truths of reason; and accordingly it usually happens that an appeal is made with deep feeling,

at some point or other, for faith, in the sense of this metaphysic, faith reached by a personal decision. For example, it is said that "there is no other pathway to faith, except by submission to the Revelation which God has made, exhibited through one's personal activity and freedom". If now we hear along with this statement, that "there is a philosophical metaphysic which knows from its own resources that there is religion and morality," we shall be curious to know whether the two pronouncements can be harmonized in a way that carries conviction. While the "Religious a priori" is thus insecure as a foundation for the truth of our faith, we shall also require to be very cautious, if we think of making use of the same idea, in the sense of a norm for the content of the truths of faith. Certainly, when we showed above (pp. 59 ff. and 164 ff.) that man's mental life reaches its full height and depth in religion, that in piety we have experience of our destiny as realized,—an idea which the very simplest teaching from the Catechism brings home with effect, where the doctrine of the creation of man in God's image is treated—it cannot be denied that in this experience of the attainment of our destiny, there is to be found a standard for judging the particular manifestations of religious life, and so also, to take an example, for condemning a faith resting on external miracles, like that which we have in "Christian Science". However, the norm for this purpose is the rule, always more profoundly realized, of our own definite religion; not any disposition for religion existing in mankind generally. And without doubt, when we seek to prove the truth of our faith, it is also important to show, as we ourselves have attempted to do, that Christian piety brings the religious disposition to its full issue; but to show this, we can as before find no religious a priori, as a norm which is definite as

it stands. Consequently the expression should be replaced once for all by words which are unambiguous.

We see then that so long as these attempts have left revelation out of sight, in spite of their great variety, they have failed to reach the sure ground of certainty. We are thus driven to the conclusion that *either no such certainty is attainable by faith, or the revelation of God in Christ has to be acknowledged with clear consciousness, as an essential ground of the proof.* We reserve for further consideration all questions of detail, especially the question how this revelation relates itself to our value-judging faculty, approving itself thereto as true. Every religion claims to rest upon revelation, proving its reality in this way, and defending itself against the charge of being an illusion. We have now satisfied ourselves why Christianity, and Christianity in particular, cannot forego such claim without relinquishing its all. In closing, we may draw attention to an argument, one which is at first sight of a very different species, that seeks to show that the historical Person of Jesus is indispensable. E. Troeltsch views Him in the central position He occupies for the Church's practical needs. He is "indispensable from the point of view of Social psychology, for worship, to make the faith effective, and to propagate it". "The law of social psychology" which applies to the formation of associations, holds good for the religious life as elsewhere: when associations are formed in connexion with spiritual religions, it is the prophets, and the personalities of the founders, who serve as prototypes, authorities, sources of power, rallying centres; and therefore "all great spiritual religions are instances of religious homage yielded to their founders and prophets. So also with the Christian idea: it will have no effective reality without association and worship; and in Christianity, the latter is just the gathering of the Church

round its Head." In relation to our question, we welcome this emphasis laid on worship; it corresponds indeed to all that we have said from the first regarding the nature of religion, in this aspect of the matter. But when Troeltsch assigns to the worship of Christ the significance, that it is "becoming immersed in the Revelation of God contained in the image of Christ"; when he speaks of a "real hunger for conviction and certainty," and says that as God is for the Christian "not an idea and possibility, but a holy Reality," and so too that the "Symbol of God" which he acknowledges, is for him "a real symbol, a real man," who "lived, struggled, trusted, and conquered as Jesus did," —what we took to be the critical matter is there admitted. But in our opinion, it requires to be expressly represented as such, and to be much more exactly defined. For we are obliged to ask, why the fellowship of Christian faith has its basis only in such worship: surely the religion will not exist for the worship, but rather the worship for the religion. The religion lives on the certainty of the real Revelation which God has made. But next, how far the faith of the Christian Church in the Revelation of God in Jesus, is the work of Jesus, and not merely the necessary work of the Church in fulfilment of a law of social psychology,— the question in this aspect of it has to be discussed later; though it is certain that the matter of our exposition up to this point is not independent of the decision given to it. Our next task, accordingly, the THIRD of this division, is to say what is here understood by revelation. We have attempted to understand its importance: we have now to define its NATURE.

In the view of our old Dogmatic Theologians, "special" or "supernatural" revelation (as distinguished

from "general" or "natural," the light implanted in reason and conscience, acted upon by contact with God's works of creation and providence), was communication of the *supernatural truths of salvation;* i.e. simply, profitable instruction in these truths. This was the view which Rationalism opposed, though it did not itself substitute a new conception of revelation. By comparison with this position, involving the affirmation or denial of such revelation, Schleiermacher's conception of revelation as direct *impartation of life* is quite as much a discovery as his conception of religion itself, to which it corresponds exactly; for if religion is essentially not a matter of knowledge or conduct, no more can revelation be essentially the communication of truths, which a man ought to know, or according to which he ought to direct his conduct. But neither in Schleiermacher's conception of religion, nor in his corresponding conception of revelation, is sufficient attention given to the religious man's interest in truth. As against the old intellectualism, the emphasis on life was certainly a notable advance, but the life in question was not defined with sufficient explicitness as spiritual and especially as moral. This applies particularly to our religion, which claims from the start to be the perfectly spiritual and moral one; and in which, conformably thereto, the idea of revelation found expression at an early date in the statement, that in Christ grace and truth have come to us. Besides, Schleiermacher regarded revelation, or immediate communication of life, as essentially an experience of the religious man: the objective basis of this subjective experience remained in the background. And yet it is just this side of the truth which is of decisive importance in our present connexion. Wherever mention is made of revelation in religion, it is claimed that the limits of the inner life are transcended, and the reality of God

is experienced. To escape both defects in Schleiermacher's view, while continuing to hold fast his undeniable advance upon the old divines, is Rothe's intention in emphasizing manifestation and inspiration, as the connected and yet distinguishable moments in every act of revelation. The manifestation, i.e. the actual making of Himself known on God's part, is the communication of life, and is indeed thought of absolutely as an objective act of God. The inspiration is the significance of the manifestation for our consciousness, the knowledge of the truth wrought by God Himself, which is given with the communication of life, explaining and perfecting it. The deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea is manifestation: "I am the Lord thy God, who have brought thee out of Egypt," is inspiration. Jesus' whole history, from the cradle to the empty grave, is manifestation; His witness and the words of His apostles are inspiration. Obviously this view of Rothe's as to revelation, in the relations stated, aims at combining in a higher unity, what is correct in the orthodox Protestant conception and in that of Schleiermacher, without, however, certainly reaching this goal; especially inasmuch as manifestation and inspiration are often found side by side, external to each other. The outcome of theological work so far upon this conception, on the exhibition of its *essential characteristics*, may be summed up in a few formulæ, which give expression to the truth of the old position, as well as that of Schleiermacher. It is true that ambiguity in the use of the terms, e.g. the words "natural" and "supernatural," is a hindrance to a common understanding, as had to be emphasized already in another connexion. In the nature of the case we have to deal with *three main aspects, the content, the form,* and *the significance* of revelation.

Upon grounds often indicated, *its content* is life, reality fully satisfied, not mere thought which we would have to inspire with life; but spiritual life, finding self-utterance in clear thought; and truth, because personal life at its highest, not an indefinite sentimental blessedness, but communion with God at once spiritual and moral. Or, from the other side, regarded from the point of view of the subjective reality of revelation: the revelation of God in our religion is a revelation which produces faith, i.e. trust. This is what the original witnesses affirm, what the Reformers discovered afresh, and what each one experiences, when he first seriously enters the world of religion, while the most advanced never gets beyond it. As the God who reveals Himself is personal holy love, His revelation consists in a self-attestation capable of producing personal trust. It is trust which makes a reality of this communion, of the life in God, which is for the same reason the highest knowledge. Thus it is that in the New Testament faith in God and knowledge of God, truth and eternal life, are interchanged in a way that is at first often perplexing. In the human relations of true love in all its forms, we have the image of this relation between the self-revealing God, and the man who opens his heart to Him. Simple as it is, the image always discloses fresh marvels. In trust, we experience a communion which is itself the highest knowledge of Him who is the object of our trust.

With regard to the *formal* relations of the conception of revelation, we may state in the forefront that this content of life and truth assigned to it is truly supernatural: the mystery of God is revealed: what has entered the heart of no man, God has prepared for those who love Him, and in their love of Him know as also they are known. But this supernatural truth given in

life, does not remain for us a thing strange and apart; on the contrary it becomes our most intimate personal possession: for it is the perfection of our nature. As regards the method of its realization, revelation is something outside of us, but does not remain external to us, is immediate but not independent of means. The proof of God must lie outside of us (we have no other unambiguous word). The very purpose of revelation is that we may become inly conscious of God, as the reality independent of our spiritual life. But what help is it to us, if it remain outside of us, without approving itself to us as the reality which exists for our sake, and awakens trust in us? For the same reason it is an immediate manifestation and yet it is not independent of means, either in history or in its personal appropriation. In its history; for if it were simply an occurrence like any other, how could we distinguish it as God's proof of His being? On the other hand, were it out of relation to all other events, how could we recognize it as real? In the same way, its personal appropriation is God's immediate act in us—this is the truth of the belief in the Holy Spirit—and yet it is indissolubly connected with the whole of our experience; the grounds for both statements being the same as before. Let it be noted at least in passing, that these last named relations may be connected by the use of those words of many meanings, "natural" and "supernatural". Such statements as a whole raise new questions which cannot be answered till later. At the same time it is certain that they express the essence of our religion, and of the idea of revelation which belongs to it.

Finally, the statements regarding content and form are in exact correspondence with the statement regarding the *value* of revelation. It is a real authority, otherwise it would be worthless. But its authority is not of a

legal order. That may suit Islam, but it is contrary to our religion. We know only a revelation which is real for trust; but trust does not stand alone and independent; it has in revelation its basis and norm.

All this, however, serves only as a preliminary to some points of view which we must not disregard, instructed as we have been by the history of the Christian idea of revelation. They first receive their full significance by being related to the *reality of the personality of Jesus.* But how are we to characterize this reality itself? How far, and in virtue of what characteristics, does it win our confidence, that in it God shows Himself operative as almighty righteous love, eternally offering sinners personal communion? Were we to say forthwith, "He is for us, in His work addressed to us, the personal self-revelation of the God of whom we speak, whereby God secures our trust: He is this in His speech, conduct, and destiny, as these are all summed up in the unity of the personal activity belonging to His vocation, upon the basis of His distinctive self-consciousness as Son,"—we should doubtless give correct expression to the faith of Christendom. It is instructive to emphasize that the positions adduced with reference to the idea of revelation, its content, its form and its significance, are capable of being summed up in the thought of the personal self-manifestation of God. But the meaning of the affirmation which sums them up, namely that Jesus is the personal self-revelation of God, comes more clearly into view, when we consider in what other ways this God of ours could reveal Himself, in order to arouse religious trust in us. To be sure, in dealing with this question, we are guided by the Revelation acknowledged in Christendom, and we cannot suppose that we could ever evolve the idea of it by means of our discussion itself. Indeed we must explicitly reject the *erroneous*

opinion, that the exposition which follows amounts to a syllogism—A perfect self-revelation of God can be acknowledged, only if He manifests Himself in such and such a way: it is in this particular way that He has proved Himself active in Jesus: therefore we acknowledge Jesus as the perfect self-revelation of God. By no means. On the contrary, starting with Jesus as a Reality, we derive by deliberate reflection thereupon the separate moments of the revelation which claims to be understood as a revelation of the God in question; if the nature of the God who reveals Himself, and the manner of His revelation of Himself, must correspond and actually do correspond in all religions (cf. pp. 52 ff., 91 ff.). But, when, by an abstraction, we put the question as if we had not yet the answer, the reality in all its aspects stands out more clearly for us, and its significance becomes more intelligible; what we have long been accustomed to comes home to us with new meaning. At the same time, the whole history of mankind before and independently of Christ, with its imperfect yet not valueless belief in revelations, becomes more fruitful to us; and we understand the yearning complaint which the poet puts into the mouth of the sage, when he remembers the many messengers of God who brought but half light. "Wilt Thou never gather all together into one clear and living word, Almighty One? Will Thy loving thought, full of pity for our sorrow, never condescend to the limits of mortality, tremulous with yearning?" (Geibel).

A discussion such as we propose has the following stages. *First of all*, it is clear wherein such revelation cannot consist. That is to say, not in a nature miracle, be it ever so unheard of; or, as may be supposed, in a theophany surrounded by any sort of halo of supernatural glory. There would be no inner connexion between the nature of God as conceived by the Christian revelation,

and the manifestation in question. Righteous Love would not be revealed thereby, though its seal were made to shine resplendent with the words written in fire, "Sins are forgiven". It is only the other side of this same fact, when we add that there could never be any confidence in such love; the most that could come into play would be a sort of compulsion to yield to it. This would be the case, apart altogether from the unanswerable objection, that such miracles have a meaning only for the person who himself experiences them: they can be accepted by those who come after, only on the testimony of others—a sort of assent that no Protestant will feel disposed to recognize as trust. Consequently we must in any case turn from the merely natural province to that of *personal* life or history: we think of God as personal, and in harmony therewith, we must conceive of man's relation to Him as one of personal trust. Would it be sufficient then to have accurate communication of supernatural *religious truths*, by a historical person as the bearer of a revelation from God? We have passed beyond that position too in what we have already said. That might suffice for a legal religion like Islam, although even it is not satisfied therewith. Further in order to prove such communication of the truth, we would be compelled almost of necessity to have recourse again to external miracles; in which case what was said above would again apply. Rather, as our reflection, resting on general grounds, leads us to conclude, the drawing near on God's part in a historical personality must prove itself real, *through God's inmost being revealing itself in his whole work and life.* God's will of love towards sinners must confront us in the work of this personality, in a manner so effectual, that his work can be experienced as the work of God, and consequently excite in us trust in the love of God. But such a unity

in the matter of work would be inconceivable for us, unless it sprang from an all-dominating consciousness, of being here for the very purpose of making such a revelation —of having this *vocation*. "I am come to seek and to save that which is lost." Again such a consciousness of vocation is inconceivable, or at all events unethical (and in that case, of what value would it be in our religion?) unless it rests upon a unique *self-consciousness*, i.e. an indubitable certainty regarding the God who purposes so to reveal Himself. But in the sphere of our religion, this certainty is conceivable only as the closest personal communion with the life of the Father, only when the inmost content of self-consciousness—within the limits of human life—is the same disposition of love which forms the content of the Divine nature; when such a person, loved by the Father as His Son, loves the Father, and therefore loves men, who through Him are to become children of God. "No one knows the Father except the Son, and no one knows the Son except the Father." But now for the other side. As we have been led onwards from the thought of an activity as God's, that is of the activity of a historical person who excites the confidence that God is working in him, to the consciousness of vocation on his part, and from that point to the inmost depths of his self-consciousness, so we are necessarily directed back again from those depths to the clear light of his activity, as we may know it. That innermost sanctuary of a consciousness as to self which was unique, and the implied consciousness of a vocation which was also unique, can become certain to us as a reality of this world, only if we find it in the form of a personal life which is truly human, a form therefore which is characterized by trust and prayer as well as by purposeful action. How could we otherwise give credit to such an extraordinary claim,

unless it were verified by reference to a plain and demonstrable impression made by the whole work of a life, viewed as a unity? Stupendous claims have been advanced by many in human history. They have been forgotten as dreamers or condemned as deceivers, unless they made good their claims by the facts of their life. They were not protected by their good intentions, or even by their fidelity to what they regarded as their vocation, from the reproach of having taken too much upon them. Finally, if this one person is really to be for all men, however separated in space and time, the revelation of God, his figure in history must be sufficiently recognizable and definite, to be able to evoke even in us—even at the remotest point in history—the assurance that God was working in him.

The more carefully we traverse the separate steps of this way, the clearer does it become, that these moments of a revelation of the living God capable of evoking faith, are synthesized in the thought, great in its simplicity, which has already engaged our attention, while we investigated the nature of religion and of Christianity, and which will demand more and more consideration in our doctrines of God, of sin, of Christ, and of regeneration. The question, that is to say, always resolves itself into this: How is the communion of God with man and, on the basis of this, of man with God, brought about? It is a case of "God's being in man and man's being in God". The answer is: To realize such communion is the purpose of God's self-manifestation; the latter is the proper means for the supreme purpose in question. God realizes this communion in One, that thereby it may become real in all: He does this by the personal act of this One, by His being in God, because God is in Him. No other way would make perfect communion between God and man, and man and God, a reality; the means

corresponds exactly to the end. Now it is the unspeakable joy of Christendom, that it does not merely desire such communion between God and man, or dream wistfully about the sort of manifestation of God that would give assurance of God, if it were real, but on the contrary finds such a manifestation in Jesus. All the traits adduced regarding the trustworthy, because trust-inspiring, bearer of a revelation, are derived from the *portrait of Jesus.* Only in order that we might rightly appreciate the uniqueness of His portrait, they were pictured as if we could evolve them, whereas in truth they are derived from contemplation of Him. The well-known phraseology of the New Testament would rise spontaneously to our lips, if we were to enlarge upon this subject as we might well do. We may now sum up in simple fashion what we have got to say: All the moments which we look for in a revelation capable of exciting religious trust, in their necessary inner relation to each other, the Christian Church finds harmoniously realized in the historical personality of Jesus. In His words, deeds, and suffering, and in the impression made by His life as a whole, He works as God; as the God by whom He professes Himself sent, whom He designates it as His calling to bring near to us, and assure us of, knowledge of whom by Himself alone He urges as the supreme proof of this calling. The content of the divine life is effectively realized in the form of an historical life under human conditions; Jesus is the personal self-revelation of God—of the God who, in His Kingdom, unites sinners with Himself and with each other in the eternal fellowship of His love, judging sin, pardoning guilt, renewing the will, vanquishing death. Jesus is the personal self-revelation of this God, since He evokes such trust as the actively real presence of the invisible God in the actual world, in which there is

otherwise no real assured confidence in this God. He is the ground of faith, i.e. of trust. This is the truth to which the faith of the New Testament testifies in the most varied forms. What is most important, it records the impression which Jesus Himself produced, and which He always continues to produce, as the ages pass. To show in detail in what sense Jesus, as being in this way the foundation of faith, is also the object of faith, is the work of the doctrine of Christ in Dogmatics proper. But it follows from His significance which we have just discussed, as the foundation of faith, that He is also the object of faith, all further definition being reserved. We may indicate here how valuable this sequence of thought is. It frees us at the outset from the fear that faith in Jesus is to be violently thrust upon us, or that we have to work ourselves artificially into it—a burden in both cases, and no blessedness. Consideration of what is for ourselves the ground of faith, has brought us to Him ; it has taught us to recognize in Him the ground of our trust. We are bound to Him by the strongest bonds there are, those of trust rooted and grounded upon Him. As certainly as we believe in God, we believe in Him ; we have the right to believe ; in the proper sense of the word we ought to believe ; but there is no compulsion about it. There is no longer any possibility of that dread thought of compulsion, the greatest enemy of all real faith. God asks us whether we trust Him, for He thinks us worthy of entering into personal fellowship with Him. He asks us this question in Jesus—whether we bestow our trust on Jesus : whether we bestow it on Him in Jesus, in whom He works on us, exciting trust : whether we are willing to let ourselves be laid hold of by His love revealed in Jesus.

But the thought here turned to account in Apolo-

getics that, as the self-revelation of God in history, Jesus is the ground of our faith, calls for a *more precise definition.* That is, we have briefly to define with greater precision the extent of the historical material, in which we can see the self-revelation of God. Are we to include everything that has come down to us regarding Jesus, or only a part of this tradition? Is the ground of our faith an entity in which every item is of equal importance, and equally capable of serving as a foundation for faith? This question is earnestly debated, even among those who agree in the main point; that is, who with full consciousness recognize in Jesus as the Revelation of God the basis of faith. "THE WHOLE BIBLICAL CHRIST" is this basis, according to the one party; and they understand thereby not only the whole series of the so-called "facts of salvation," from the miraculous birth to the bodily ascension, but also the collective testimony of the first Church regarding Jesus, which is preserved for us in the New Testament. The other side hold that only THE PORTRAIT OF JESUS, or HIS INNER LIFE, should be regarded as revelation producing faith, and consequently as the basis of faith; this portrait or inner life being manifested and tested in the whole course of His life, and of the activity pertaining to His vocation, and reaching its consummation on the Cross. A way is being opened on both sides, towards a common understanding with reference to this contested point, often more surely than the friendly opponents expressly recognize. The latter (W. Herrmann) emphasize that in the Crucified we feel the courage of victory, seeing Him always as conqueror; and they here refer not merely to His consciousness, or His claim, but also to the legitimacy of this consciousness and claim of His, as a matter that we require to prove. The former on the other hand (Kähler) instinctively distinguish in that collective testi-

mony of Scripture, between the essential and what is of less importance; not only to individual expressions in Hebrews about Melchisedec, but even, among the facts of salvation, to the miraculous birth, e.g., they do not ascribe the same immediate significance as to the Resurrection; even when with full conviction they assert them in their Christology, they do not in Apologetics make the same use of them as of other parts of the tradition. Their reasons for so doing are quite plain. In reference to facts of revelation, it must be shown in some way how they can produce our confidence in them; how we can perceive the God who shows Himself operative, as operative in them. No one will assert that we can thus turn to account, in the same sense and measure, the mystery of the Birth and the portrait of the Redeemer. This is so, quite apart from the fact, that a large portion of the New Testament itself knows nothing of the account of the birth of which we speak: Paul preaches the Crucified and Risen One; it is there that he sees the foundation of faith. So our investigation resolves itself essentially into the question, whether even the Resurrection belongs in the strict sense to the basis of the faith. For the present we leave out of account the special question *as to the manner* in which it is conceived: all that is meant is that the disciples, when they saw the Lord, were not self-deceived, that He actually showed Himself to them as the Living One.

In this point the difference above mentioned, among those who in other respects are at one in their estimate of the history, once more appears. Recognition of the Resurrection, says the one party, is a consequence of faith, the basis of which is the inner life of Jesus consummated on the Cross, is a necessary thought for already existent faith. It belongs itself to the basis of faith, answer the others. Manifestly the former are afraid,

not without justification, that the Easter message may be accepted with a submission which is merely external, and consequently irreligious, indeed sinful because injurious to truthfulness, instead of by an act of faith. And who would deny that many Easter sermons are calculated to act as a temptation to this sin? A temptation certainly to which most of our contemporaries do not expose themselves, whatever may be their motives, whether conscientiousness or indifference. On any theological platform, allowance might be made for this consideration by the frank admission, that the resurrection, as a basis for faith, can avail only for one who has already been impressed in some way, by those other features of the personality of Jesus, of which we have spoken as making a first appeal. Indeed, according to the faith of the Primitive Church itself, He did not appear to all the people, but to witnesses chosen aforetime (Acts x. 41). That He might have shown Himself alive to the Chief Priests and Scribes as well, is a thought which plainly could not occur to the actual faith of the Early Church, because standing in too obvious contradiction to the word of the Lord (Luke xvi. 31). Or in other words: Faith cannot begin as it chooses, with the impression of the public activity of Jesus, or with the resurrection; it cannot deal with these layers of its foundation which have to be distinguished from each other, as if they were perfectly homogeneous. Whoever has not allowed himself to be in any way attracted, humbled and exalted by Jesus' character, whoever has not felt in His simple actions on earth the mark of the invisible God, whoever has remained indifferent to His love for sinners, His patience as a teacher in His intercourse with the disciples, His earnestness in opposition to the hypocrisy of pretended piety, whoever has not found all this perfected and guaranteed upon the Cross,

is necessarily precluded from understanding the message, "the Crucified lives"; and if he accepts it, it is only a mere supposition, of the kind upon which no one can base faith worthy of the name. But if there were no doubt of this on the one side, the other for their part might acknowledge that, as a matter of fact, the resurrection belongs to the foundation which is capable of sustaining perfect religious faith. If we exclude it therefrom, we have no full idea of the revelation of our God, nor as a consequence of the foundation of our Christian faith. If the life of Jesus end with the Cross, in His love proved by His death we have, doubtless, a revelation of the highest love that it would be possible to find, which accordingly we shall gladly call "divine". But when we say that the love of God is revealed to us in Jesus, we mean something different, namely that in this Jesus, the love of God is revealed as the highest reality, as the ground and goal of the universe. And this is not the case unless it manifests itself as victorious over death. The use of the popular word "divine," is apt to conceal the fact that we use it in somewhat different senses. Consequently also in the growth of faith in each individual, a point will be reached where the individual sees himself confronted by the question, whether his trust in Jesus perfects itself in trust in His life from the dead. Only when this is the case, will he himself see in his trust the religious confidence of Christianity; though certainly he will not regard as valueless the beginnings of such faith, when they show themselves. But he knows that, without this goal, what was experienced as valuable by the way, would be valueless in the relation here in question. Jesus would remain for him as example and guide, but as regards what went beyond this in those initial experiences of which we spoke, the impression of the active presence of God in Him, the

revelation of God, would slowly but surely disappear. The more readily will these positions be admitted, the less they are asserted with blatant insistence.

We have sought to define how far Jesus as the revelation of God is the foundation of our faith. But does not this *confine* the revelation of God to too narrow a space in history? Does not the following statement speak of broader and firmer ground: "God is revealed not in Jesus only, but also in all the matter that preceded Him, and that followed Him, without which, in spite of all His uniqueness, He would be incomprehensible"? Does not at least the expression, "But for Jesus I would be an Atheist" (Gottschick), merit this reproach? Its original intention was really just to bring home to consciousness as vividly as possible, how indispensable this supreme revelation of our God is, for the certainty of living faith in this God; and in this sense it holds good, because here in the last resort there is only the one alternative. Jesus himself said that He alone shows us the Father, and we have explained the grounds which induce us to admit His claim. But certainly that statement of His is very apt to be misunderstood. For it is just as obvious that an external isolation of Jesus is nowise necessary, indeed that it must not be sought for at all, where there is agreement with that fundamental thought of which we spoke. On the contrary, He claimed to stand in integral connexion with the revelation of God in Israel, and we must consider Him in connexion therewith in order to understand Him at all. But the relation of this revelation to that in Jesus is, again according to His own claim, that of the preparatory to the completed. It is in all seriousness preparatory *revelation*, but just as certainly is it only *preparatory*. In this sense it really belongs to the foundation of the faith, but also only in this sense. (See

further details in the Doctrine of Holy Scripture.) We have nothing to do here with individual difficulties; we are concerned purely with the fundamental idea. This secures a footing, slowly but surely, wherever there is a truly Christian faith, as against all exaggerated claims on behalf of the Old Testament as well as against all underestimation of it; whether the one or the other be advanced in the name of faith or of unbelief.

Here also we find the right light in which to view *the History of the Church.* For us it too is certainly a revelation of God, and no dogmatic veto will keep the Christian community from using it accordingly. To call to remembrance just one thing: it is to History that we are indebted for the knowledge that, according to the counsel of God itself, the Gospel is to have a chequered career in this world. At this point indeed, in order to be quite clear, we must venture upon the statement that, in one aspect, the history of Christendom is more important for the faith of the Church, as a revelation of the thoughts of her God, than that of the people of Israel, just because it is definitely Christian. But it is no contradiction to add: from another point of view, that of Israel is more important, namely because its authentic significance is given by Jesus Himself, and it is so far complete; while for the history of Christendom, we ourselves must apply the supreme test of the revelation of God in Christ, and can do so only tentatively and imperfectly. In short, what is said in John XIV. to XVI. regarding Jesus and the Spirit, furnishes the ideas we speak of and have only to indicate here. The revelation of God in Jesus remains the essential point.

The more clearly this is recognized, the more dispassionately will the individual Christian, as well as the Church, recognize and value all else that may be understood as a revelation of God. Here as in ordinary cases,

the way is from one's base into the open. Those who make for the open, without having first settled their plan on the ground which alone is secure, fail of attaining the goal of certainty. When we start from the storm-proof spot of the revelation in Jesus, the world becomes full of the revelation of God. This is true of *the History of the World*, with its wonderful development of all the higher values, not merely the religious and ethical, but also the esthetic and the scientific. It is true even of *Nature* itself, full of perplexities as it is for unstable faith. It is high time that Christendom should make a new application of the apostolic principle, "All things are yours," and claim Nature as its own. We rejoice in the prospect of the philosophy of history and nature having a future more securely than ever before based upon living faith in God. Finally, it can scarcely be necessary to direct special attention here again to the circumstance, that there is an inexhaustible variety of ways, in which all these effectual operations of God prove themselves real, for the life experience of the individual.

At this point, however, another question, and an urgent one, arises when we are speaking of the foundation of the certainty of Christian faith. We found that the revelation of God in history is indispensable for this purpose. Is this history TRUSTWORTHY HISTORY? We have had difficulty in delaying the consideration of this question so long. Nor can we agree with those whose final solution of it is the strangely inconsistent one, that it does not matter much about the trustworthiness of the history. That is to make a virtue of necessity in the worst sense; to be generous to the point of self-impoverishment. Either the history is of value for the establishment of the faith, in which case it must be at the same time reliable, or it is not, in which case cer-

tainly it is quite a matter of indifference how far it holds good. Let us suppose that a future, however distant, will prove that Jesus is only a creation of faith, and it is all over with faith; if it be in any way based upon history as we have maintained that it is.

But certainly it must be carefully determined *what measure of historical trustworthiness* is essential, if we are to base our faith upon history, and what measure of trustworthiness history in general can afford. In the controversy regarding the trustworthiness of the history of Jesus, both points are often neglected. The opponents of Christianity make the wish father to the thought, and speak as if faith must have a history every detail of which is quite indisputable; and make it appear as if history of the kind were to be found in other departments, only not in the particular one with which we are concerned. It is child's play then to put faith in the wrong; for it is never difficult to refute an opinion carried to the point of absurdity. Only no proof can be given of either of these presuppositions of which we speak. Faith neither requires historical trustworthiness in the measure presupposed, nor is history in general capable of affording it. We have the same two-fold negation as before, when dealing with the question of assent-compelling demonstration (p. 146 ff.). There we had to face the general problem; here we have the particular application to the province of history. If the trustworthiness of the tradition regarding Jesus could be conclusively demonstrated, there would be an instance of what we had on that former occasion to renounce in the name of faith, for the sake of its essential character. Intelligent persons would be compelled to believe, or rather not to believe but to admit an indisputable fact. On the contrary, however, there is no such compelling demonstration in history, as soon as we pass beyond the

verification of external events, and simple questions regarding their interrelation. We see the proof of this in the fact, that distinguished historical experts cannot agree about distinguished historical personalities. The more complicated the inner life, the higher the significance for universal history, of the characters to be delineated, the more undeniable is the personal equation on the part of the investigator. Of this we have lately had in reference to Buddha what might be called ocular demonstration (Oldenberg and Pischel). It is certainly unworthy as well as incorrect, to depreciate historical knowledge in sceptical fashion, upon pretence of doing honour to faith; but the same is true of the overestimate of such knowledge as knowledge, the confounding of demonstrative certainty and the ideal of the highest possible probability. According to all that has gone before, there can be no doubt what measure of trustworthiness the history of Jesus must have, if it is to be capable of being recognized as the revelation of God. Namely high PROBABILITY for the religiously susceptible man, strong enough for him to be able with a good conscience to surrender himself to the impression of the Person in question, and to His working as the present activity of God, to apprehend on the ground that he is apprehended; so that he now rises by this means to the certainty which, but for that surrender, would be unattainable. For the man who is not personally interested, on the other hand, that history must be indisputable, must be characterized by IRREFUTABILITY, in the sense that he is compelled to admit, in order to maintain a good scientific conscience, that he is kept from giving his assent, not by compelling grounds of a historical character, but by a theory of the universe opposed to the Christian. Nor do we forget here that this measure of trustworthiness is important only for the history, as

we have already defined its compass. We are not concerned with all the possibilities, or with all that one might like to know, but only with what in it has the definite value of being capable of being understood as the revelation of God, and consequently as the foundation of faith. Obviously a faith once assured of its foundation, will sympathetically draw within the circle of its knowledge much that at first it left aside, and will learn to regard as real many parts of the tradition which at first it rejected. But if it understands itself, it will not efface the distinction between the one thing needful for it, and the many other things. To scoff at this as a "theology of the minimum," would be to underestimate the actual needs of the religious life. Its foremost concern (in this connexion), is a sure standing ground. Its right and duty is to extend from this as a centre, to the whole breadth and depth of which it is capable. To attempt this prematurely and with too little care, often brings its own punishment, in bitter troubles that one might have spared oneself and others. But while confining oneself in the first instance to the main point, one may at the same time rejoice by anticipation at the incontestable truth, that as regards the question of actuality, a historical personality and the spiritual effects proceeding from Him, have again an untold advantage over the isolated events of external history.

Our present task then is to determine whether *the measure of trustworthiness indicated*, can really be established *for the history within the limits we have defined.* In order to answer this question carefully, it is necessary to make a particular application to the problem before us, of a consideration which we had to bring forward a little ago, when dealing with the question of the limits of demonstrative proof in history. I refer to the circumstance, that a series of ostensibly historical objec-

tions to the reliability of the gospel tradition, have their origin, not at all in grounds of historical method, but in some definite theory of the universe. Due account must be taken of this in each separate instance. It applies with quite special force to the position, made use of by many without any proof, that a historical character cannot be qualitatively perfect in his special province, and that Jesus accordingly cannot be in the sphere of religion the perfect revelation of God, in the sense which we have maintained: we merely refer once again to His own claim, that no one knows the Father save the Son. This objection is a very familiar one in our day; it is an axiom of the theory of evolution in its thoroughgoing form (p. 9 ff., 125 ff.). As such then it ought to be designated; it should not, as often happens, be given forth as the result of historical investigation. This confusion of thought is doubly strange, when, as is frequently the case, it does duty in the proof in the form of the prettiest circle imaginable. This is something like the shape it takes. The theory of evolution makes us suspicious of the idea of an absolute entity; nor does the history of Jesus, when accurately investigated, demand any such idea; consequently it is in its own sphere a proof of the absolute validity of the theory of evolution. Naturally if these positions are silently assumed, and thereupon all instances to the contrary, in the history of Jesus, of whatever kind, are put aside, the result desired is easy to reach. It is precisely the testimony of Jesus regarding Himself, of which we speak, which is frequently either suspected as regards its general historicity, simply on account of its content, without any grounds in Criticism whether Lower or Higher, or, on the other hand, is twisted about, till there is left of its obvious sense only as much as is thought to be possible, according to the analogy of other

expressions elsewhere; and for this the supreme standard is the analogy of the religious self-consciousness, what the investigator in question regards as possible according to his own ultimate convictions. Those who refuse to go that way, taking the words of Jesus somewhat more scientifically as they stand, but yet judge them according to the standard above referred to, certainly cannot help finding an element of fanaticism in Jesus' highest testimonies to Himself. An inaccurate use of the word "interpret" often leads in the same direction. The attempt fully to understand Jesus' testimony to Himself by analogies elsewhere known to us, is the same thing in effect as to deny them in the manner indicated, or to change their significance, or to treat Him as a fanatic. Now faith could relevantly defend itself against all such objections, if they openly declared themselves for what they are. But when they profess to be the necessary result of the historical method, the confusion is of course almost inextricable. Their legitimacy, or the reverse, would have to be settled, by testing the claims of the various theories of the universe. In coming to a decision upon this point, the history of Jesus is itself at least one of the most important factors. In spite of this, or must we say on this account, in dealing with His history there is often a marked lack of the reserve and caution, observed in reference to other outstanding phenomena; the feeling, though it be an indefinite one, of how much is here at stake, is apt to interfere with clearness of judgment. How sensitive is our age to the mystery of personality in general, even when the individual instance presents the greatest enigmas! A like reserve is not always observed in the presence of what Jesus suggests to our hearts as His inmost being. As we have a widely circulated romance regarding Jesus (Frenssen's "Hilligenlei"), any one may easily prove this

for himself. The treatment of Luke VII., e.g. is manifestly unhistorical: it is not possible to separate Jesus' forgiving love to sinners from His righteous earnestness against sin. By starting from so clear an instance, it will be possible to arrive at a really historical judgment as to other positions as well, which, though apparently much better founded, have nevertheless their origin not in the findings of history, but in preconceived ideas, belonging to a theory of the universe opposed to the Christian one. As a welcome instance to the contrary of what we have in Frenssen, one drawn from the most recent literature, mention may be made of H. Oeser, whose teaching is—Jesus had the grace of God without measure; God was living in His will, therefore He was holy, therefore He had such profound insight. Who had ever such profound insight,—and you want to correct Him? The mystery of Jesus is in the bosom of God; it is the mystery of grace; He did not work by suggestion.

It was necessary to refer with such emphasis to the way in which the purely historical judgment can readily be, and often actually is, distorted by considerations derived from some theory of the universe; because it is only in this way that it can be fully shown, that there is *no sort of contradiction between a judgment based upon purely historical considerations, and the actual needs of faith.* Faith has no reason either to veil any facts, or to readjust them in any artificial way. The New Testament writings are without question a literature by themselves, and a comparison with other testimonies not composed from the standpoint of faith is, with some insignificant exceptions, impossible. The authorship of the Gospels in their present form by eye-witnesses will always be contested. Further, they comprise only a portion of the history of Jesus. Again, the tradition is a

two-fold one. For all these reasons a biography of Jesus is impossible. Nor is faith interested in such. The historical materials indispensable for faith, when it understands its own nature, are reliably attested, in the sense above defined of being possessed of a high degree of probability or irrefutability, in a historical point of view. Here we may leave out of account the denials that Jesus ever existed as a historical person. It is a circumstance of some significance that a propaganda like that of Arthur Drews has had practically no success, in spite of the tendency of our time to historical scepticism (cf. A. Jülicher and many others, 1910). Nor need we take into consideration the pathological interpretation of Jesus, in the hands of a Rasmussen and De Loosten. And the attempts to understand Jesus as essentially a representative of the proletariat (Kautsky, Maurenbrecher), have also been discounted by the historians, on account of their arbitrariness in dealing with the sources: Maurenbrecher's stronger side appears in his emphasizing the transference of pre-Christian myths to Jesus. What does immediately concern us is the definite content of the historical portrait of Jesus, as it is capable, according to Christian conviction, of creating the impression of being the Revelation of God.

It has frequently been admitted, even by those who are far from seeing the Revelation of God in the history in question, how great improbability attaches to the assumption that this portrait, in its fundamental characteristics, is the creation of the religious imagination, that especially the testimony of Jesus to Himself, in its combination of the deepest humility with the highest self-assertion, could not have been put into His mouth; and what a contrast inevitably forces itself upon our notice, between the life-like distinctness of this portrait, and the poetical creations of faith, in which

also the history of Christianity is certainly far from poor (glorifications of Mary, legends of saints). The idea, however, of a material touching up of the historical portrait by the Church calls for more precise consideration. Is not what is for faith precisely the decisive point to be thus explained? Is not the relation of the Church to Jesus much more the act of its exuberant faith than Jesus' own act, and on that account not a recognition of His actual claim, or an understanding of His intention? This supremely serious question, which, though it has altered greatly as regards form since Lessing's watchword of "the Christianity of Christ," has always remained the same in substance, is nearer a definitive answer in our day than was the case even a little ago. For the inadequacy of the answer which for long first suggested itself, that Paul was the real creator of faith in Christ, is increasingly coming to be recognized. This is so, not merely because the placing of the Pauline Epistles in the second century, suffers shipwreck upon the unique fact of the relation of Marcion to Paul, but because it is necessary to recognize the circumstance that, in the matter of faith in Jesus, Paul was conscious that he was at one with the earliest Church, not that he had created such faith, and had won the earliest Church thereto. For where is there a single trace in his Epistles that differences of opinion existed regarding this point, as regarding the law, circumcision and liberty? Certainly this is still far from solving the problem of "Jesus and Paul," and the points of agreement and difference may be defined in very diverse ways. But the fact that the Gospel possessed by the Church was from the very start a Gospel occupied with Jesus, and not simply preached by Him, and that it was only through faith in Jesus that the Church came into being, is independent of this. There are then only

two possibilities. *Either* this fact has its adequate basis in the consciousness and claim of Jesus Himself, as the gospels assert, however great may be the uncertainty in matters of detail, as we must once more repeat at this point. *Or* on the other hand, the fact must be explained by the creative power of the Church, which means for us at any rate the contemporary syncretistic movement, supposed to have dominated the Church. The attempts to do this are worthy of the highest appreciation, because they see the real problem and do not conveniently ignore it, even though the result may be far from satisfactory. Unsatisfactory we must pronounce it, from the purely historical standpoint. All the elements of that syncretism of which we speak, all the parallels in religions and secret cults of that period, fail to explain what they profess to explain—the Jesus Christ of Christendom. Attempts like that of Jenssen in his Epic of Gilgamesh, have not been pushed aside unconsidered by "theological criticism," as the author would like to make out; and even a presentation of the teachings and mysteries of the "Saviour-God who dies and rises again," so little biassed in favour of our religion as that of W. Brückner (1909), closes with the admission that the association of such ideas with a historical personality, and their fundamental ethical character, tell against the dissolution of the faith in Christ in the general history of religion. However highly, therefore, we may rate the influence of contemporary syncretism upon individual elements in the primitive Christian faith, as regards the main point we always come back to the decisive impression made by the Person of Jesus. This, however, it is necessary to define with greater precision, if we are to explain anything at all. Even in a time of the utmost religious ferment, a martyr's death, however impressive, does not

turn a teacher of religious wisdom, and a courageous opponent of religious shams, into the Lord on whom the earliest Church believed. If, on the other hand, starting with the recognition of this, we see ourselves compelled to admit that Jesus made some sort of claim to be the Messiah, and at the same time we cannot understand Messiahship in the Jewish national sense, the question immediately arises, whether we are to find an element of fanaticism here or not ; which, as we have seen, is a question that cannot be answered by purely historical methods. Then, again, it will also be admitted, whatever side be taken, that there is a special argument in favour of the reliability of the gospels, derived from such expressions and narratives as caused offence at a slightly later date, the fabrication of which consequently is in the highest conceivable degree improbable. We need refer only to Mark x. 18, "No one is good" ; Mark xiii. 32, "Nor the Son," and the cry from the Cross in Mark xv. 34. If we go further into the matter, we find that a considerable number of such passages have recently been brought together. And they seem to be more conclusive, when the historian who collected them rejects faith in Jesus for his own part (Schmiedel). What was said above as to the essential limits of a historical proof becomes once more all the clearer.

After all this, we may conclude with a quotation from E. Troeltsch. "The fireworks of sensational hypotheses will come to an end, and the Church's own view of its origin will be substantially vindicated. Christianity did not arise out of a misunderstanding, or an amalgam of alien redemptive myths. It had its origin in the life and personality of Jesus. The essential features of His preaching can be known with sufficient certainty, to make it a religious unity, for every one who attributes fundamental religious significance to it. When

the cloud of dust subsides, the old aspect of things will remain in essentials, to this extent at least, that Jesus will continue to be the Source and Power of Christian Faith." This is what concerns us at our present stage. The more searchingly attention is directed to the question of the significance of this historical personality for our faith, the more clearly will the Church and the individual believer discern the harmony which pervades the whole content of His life. "Other great men have attempted for their own sakes to set at rest a mystery, a doubt, a need. Jesus *loved* in obedience to the Father; He lived for others. And in regard to this decisive point, notwithstanding all the breaks in the tradition, we know Him better than we know others, however many memoirs we may possess of them. We know His life as the perfect harmonious expression of His will to love" (A. Schlatter). At the close of the Christology we shall have to return to the great problem discussed in the foregoing. Here it may further be pointed out that there are naturally many expressions for the attitude towards history which is here represented. For example, there has quite recently been an endeavour to draw a distinction between aspects of history (Wobbermin), essentially in the sense of the foregoing expositions; but then it must be said that the opponents are apt to waste their time over an ambiguous term.

The Recapitulation of the two Sides of the Practical Proof

What we have said regarding the significance, the mode and the trustworthiness of REVELATION (pp. 172 ff.), must now in conclusion be BROUGHT INTO EXPLICIT RELATION with what was said before, on the subject of the VALUE of religious experience (pp. 163 ff.). When faith

examines itself as to its reasons for accepting the truth it holds, we come upon two solid foundations. On the one hand, there is the satisfaction of our highest needs, i.e. the realization of our true destiny ; and on the other, there is the self-manifestation of God evincing itself in action. We learned how much demonstrative force there is, in the experience of the value of faith of which we spoke, but yet at the same time, that faith cannot by its own act rid itself of the last and most disquieting suspicion, that it is self-deceived. It requires a foundation of rock, which cannot be shaken by any breaking of the waves of shifting human feeling. But in our investigation of this foundation, we had to emphasize again and again, how it is only the man who feels and acknowledges the needs of which we speak, that finds it to be a foundation of rock. Things are thus apt to look as if neither the value on the one hand, nor the revelation on the other, were in a good way ; and the taunt lies ready to hand, that it is a case of a worthless value, and a revelation which properly speaking reveals nothing, or more exactly, of a value without any active principle behind it, and a reality without value. As a matter of fact, this objection fails to recognize what faith is really concerned in, and that it is only when the relation of which we speak is maintained between the two entities, that its real interests are safeguarded. This thought has been often emphasized, but such is its decisive importance that it is worth while to bring it to the forefront once again.

A revelation that compels assent is contrary to the nature of our faith. On this point, Kant's argument at the close of his *Critique of Practical Reason* remains irrefutable. If God and Eternity in their awful majesty lay continually before our eyes, no good would be done from duty ; there would be absolutely no moral value

in our actions: the conduct of mankind would become a purely mechanical affair, where as in a puppet show all the gesticulations would be correct, but yet there would be no life in the figures. What Kant here says, primarily with reference to a demonstrative proof of God and its significance for moral conduct, holds good also with reference to a demonstrative revelation, and its relation to faith, provided that the moral character of our religion is to continue unaltered. Only, this does not exclude revelation altogether as worthless or even hurtful, as Kant thought. The life of all religion is the effective reality, that is the revelation, of God: the deeper insight into the nature of religion which we owe to Schleiermacher, has taught us to understand the significance of revelation, but just of such a revelation as we Christians have. In Jesus, God shows Himself to us in action as the Reality of greatest value: He arouses the yearning for communion with Himself as the Supreme Value, and at the same time satisfies it as the Supreme Reality. But because it is a question of the reality of the supreme value, He wills to arouse and satisfy the yearning of which we speak, only in the person who wills to let it be aroused and satisfied. The revelation of God bestows on him what no wish nor longing, nor act of will, however honest, to experience God, can produce by its own effort. It is something that can be created, only by a drawing near on God's part, if this longing exists. Hunger never satisfies, but only the hungry are satisfied. No one ever secures a friend simply by wishing to have him for a friend; one must reveal oneself, and prove that there is real value in the desire for friendship; but real friendship exists only when this proof meets with a heart that responds to it. Jesus promises that those who hunger after righteousness shall be satisfied; nor is this any empty word for them. He speaks it, and He

works as the Father works, for the Father works in Him. The reason for Luther's delight in the story of Zacchaeus was, that it brings into view with special clearness this relation of which we speak, between the sense of value and the yearning on the one hand, and the gift of God and the satisfaction of the longing on the other. Jesus causes the receptive person, the person who feels his need, to feel and acknowledge in Himself the supreme value of life as a personal reality, and asks his trust. Under the influence of this impression, therefore, the man who is "called" (Synoptists), "drawn" (John), "apprehended" (Paul), ventures to decide for faith; the impression of reality, in combination with the sense of value, becomes for him the basis of trust, the personal venture of which we speak; and in the experience which begins in the very act of trust, he attains to assurance concerning what is at once the Reality possessed of greatest value, and the Value possessed of most reality, the Personality of Jesus and God in Him. The feeling of reality and that of value are found combined in all sorts of ways, and in varying degrees of strength: the major emphasis rests now upon the one, now upon the other. But the two constitute an indissoluble unity. Our age, as we saw, is sceptical regarding the significance of historical revelation. Consequently so far as it is concerned, special value attaches to those figures of the past, who became and continued Christians for the very reason that they experienced its significance, even in opposition to the prevailing tendency of their day, or their own past. In the history of the great in the Kingdom of God, as well as of the least, this experience repeats itself. For Justin Martyr, the reality of what possesses supreme value is to such an extent the decisive factor, that he could look upon the Gospel as scarcely new in the matter of its essential content, by comparison

with the most profound ideas of Greek Philosophy. A Schleiermacher, influenced in the first instance, on the other hand, by the specific value of the Gospel, declares that "whoever robs it of faith in the historical Christ as the objective element, as revelation, understands not a word of it". From the starry heaven of great ideas, he turns to the sun of God's real existence in Jesus. "Christ's appearing as active, that is as affecting us in a certain way, is the true revelation and the objective element" (Letters 4, 335). To expound this thought in view of the needs of our day, has been the purpose of our whole discussion so far.

What we have said may stand in need of great improvement in matters of detail, but the guiding principle to which we refer is imposed upon us by our very subject. Objections such as that the objectivity of revelation is thereby infringed upon, or on the other hand that the objective element is too much in evidence, only prove in truth that the real nature of the problem is not yet understood; namely how the objective element which is indispensable works upon the subject, and becomes an inward personal possession, which is just the matter that Schleiermacher describes. A revelation which does not produce trust, is as valueless as a faith which does not rest upon revelation. Hence also it is an unwarranted objection, that the inward working of God which we have spoken of, and the working of Christ, are not related to each other in any way that can be accurately defined. This objection always proceeds on the ground that the other conception whose inexactness we attempted to prove, is the correct one. It seems to be clearer, but it fails to do justice to the actual facts of the case. Again, we shall no more be troubled with the reproach which we encountered at the beginning of this section, that the interest of every living religion in the

present, comes into conflict with the emphasizing of historical revelation, that is revelation which in some way belongs to the past. This reproach is justified with reference to the attempts denoted by the phrase "Modern Jesuanism," which are in evidence wherever mere inward revelation is felt to be inadequate—in our opinion rightly so—but the effort is made to supplement it by appeal to the "historical effects produced by Jesus". This means appeared to us inadequate for the purpose aimed at. The Personality of Jesus, on the other hand, as we have realized its significance, is "strong and many-sided enough to speak directly to every age, without being recast" (Steinmann). In this way the legitimate desire for immediacy of religious experience of which we spoke, is not interfered with, but actually satisfied; while, detached from Jesus, it is straining after the impossible. And the weak fluctuation of the thought of our time between a slavish attachment to history and an untenable independence (cf. Goethe's utterance—"Gladly would I cast off tradition and be quite original, but the undertaking is a serious one and leads to many woes"), can only be overcome by recognizing the centre of the Christian faith as we have represented it.

Lastly by keeping in mind the endless *multifariousness of life* and history, we shall have an answer to the scruples so often urged by many, against consciously turning to account the history of Jesus as revelation, for the proof of the truth of our religion. They are afraid that a very complicated possibility, which becomes an actuality only in exceptional cases, may be pronounced a position universally valid. It is, they say, only in the case of a very small proportion of Christians, that the certainty of their faith is consciously based upon Christ. Most derive their life from the incalculable effects of the Christian spirit in the Church, and so far as they are possessed of personal

faith in the stricter sense at all, it is evoked by the influence of Christian personalities, and sustained by the impression derived from them. To esteem such influence lightly, is in a quite special degree contrary to the standpoint here advocated. But the decisive question is precisely that of the impregnable basis of faith: the clearest answer will be found, not by reference to the many, who have no special battle to fight for their faith, so that they are not compelled to examine the foundations carefully for themselves, but by reference to those who have to fight every inch of their way. It is in the leaders that we must study the nature of the subject in which they lead. We have often emphasized the fact that, in the sphere of real religion, the leaders are not simply the great names of history, but also many whose names are unknown. All of them bear witness in the clearest possible terms to Jesus as the foundation of their faith. They are the more emphatic about this, the more grateful they are for all other inspiring and strengthening influences. It is only right, therefore, that Christian preaching never tires of pointing to this as the way to the deepest sure foundation. In the Christian Church the normal outcome of the growth of faith, is to become conscious of the indissoluble connexion of which we spoke, between Christian faith and Christ as the indispensable solid foundation of its certainty. It is just when it is thus regarded and treated as the normal outcome, that we have the surest preventive against all mechanical reduction to the same dead level; clearness in method is the most reliable safeguard against slavish dependence on method. The bond with Christ is so strong and profound, but at the same time so delicate and free from constraint, that it becomes a reality for each one, according to his own individuality. But to deny it is to deny the certainty of faith; for the argu-

ments which on a former occasion carried us beyond purely subjective experience, teaching us to understand and value revelation, are not disproved by being repeated at this point, with the plea that injury is done to the richness of life. Conscious union with Christ does no injury thereto, but the confidence of faith is certainly impaired, where the connexion of which we speak is relaxed. How far we are from seeking in any part of this discussion to favour a preconceived view, may be further shown by our drawing attention expressly to a problem of the Christian life, which is presented here, and not infrequently meets us in pronouncements of the inner life which are beyond suspicion. What if the faith in God which rests on faith in Christ, is to become uncertain, through the shattering of the faith in Christ? In that case, it becomes plain from the pronouncements in question that, even at this juncture, a noteworthy interaction occurs between one's realization of God in a general way, and that faith in Him which is fully conscious and certain of itself,—the faith which depends on Christ. Even then, the general realization points to Jesus, and Jesus always brings it anew to perfection, at all stages of the development. On both sides, the Christian is always growing, never complete. So this apparent objection itself only serves to confirm our fundamental conception.

It only remains that we should point out at the conclusion of this proof that, when all has been said, and when the proof is formulated as has been done quite in the spirit of John VII. 17, it must not of course be understood as if insight into its formal correctness necessarily led to faith. This is a strange but by no means uncommon error, due to the influence of the scholastic impulse in theology. "The practical proof" for the truth of the Christian faith must itself certainly

be treated as a matter of doctrine, if and in so far as the question is one of logical consistency in the chain of thought. But it is wholly unjustifiable, here as elsewhere, if there is the slightest tendency to confuse the recognition of this consistency with the personal possession of the truth (cf. on the other side, e.g. J. T. Beck, in the Introduction to his "Science of Christian Faith"). If, on the other hand, hearty recognition of the actual state of matters as we realized it, incurs the suspicion of showing a lack of the scientific spirit, or of shelving the question, and the favourite objection that, where arguments are wanting, the decision is left to "conscience," is raised, we may point to the fact that we are not, by any poor subterfuge, setting aside the claims of real knowledge in what we are saying. On the contrary, these claims have already been defined in principle, and will forthwith be further elaborated.

Finally, it is not superfluous at the close of this whole section, to indicate once more the point of view from which alone we meant there to look at the matter. We are dealing with the proof of the truth of the Christian faith, with the question how we become certain of its truth,—and we find it is by the working of God, which assures us in our hearts of His historical working in Christ; as this has to be set forth in the Doctrine of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. God's working without this definite relation to His work in Christ, is by no means denied or undervalued in what we assert; rather it is acknowledged without reserve, both in the sphere of the non-Christian religions, and also within the Christian Church; or, looked at from the other side, religious experiences of the kind are by no means declared to be an illusion. Such Christocentric teaching would be opposed by the whole of the New Testament, and by the impartial observation of human

life; and it would impoverish the Christian idea of the God who in His eternal goodness draws near to those who seek Him, and "does according to His good pleasure, beyond what we ask or conceive," even when men feel after Him in the greatest darkness, and when their power of will is the weakest. And according as God draws near, religious confidence is built up. This we have often insisted on above. But in view of the constantly recurring misinterpretation of the serious estimate which is formed of the highest revelation in history, we had to give special prominence once more to the matter in question.

On looking back upon this proof of the truth of our religion, we find an answer in principle to another question, the omission of which so far has perhaps surprised the reader, that namely of The Absoluteness of our Religion.

The whole problem as it is now understood, is still of recent origin. The great victory of Christianity, gained at the cost of severe struggle, for long centuries kept the question from becoming a burning one. It was only in the by-ways, let us say, of the "Enlightenment of the Middle Ages" that there was a deeper appreciation of it; and then when the Renaissance put it with new insistence, it was forced into the background once more by the vigorous life of the Reformation. When it became a burning question in the conflict with Deism and Rationalism, the weapons derived from the traditional Apologetic proved inadequate. Religions were too long divided simply into true and false. The proof from miracle, which had now more and more come to be exclusively relied upon, fell short of the mark, in view of the circumstance that the adherents of every religion believe their own religion full of miracle.

German Idealism seemed to have adduced a far superior proof of the absoluteness of Christianity, and one of abiding validity. By sheer force of reason the idea of religion was produced, and Christianity was declared to be the realization of this idea. It is well known why this illusion had to go. Nowadays the "Religio-historic Theology" (p. 125 ff.) maintains before the Christian Church, the impossibility of affording any proof at all of the absoluteness of her religion; but invites her to accept what is supposed to be the inevitable, by assuring her that it is enough that Christianity has not been surpassed so far, that she need not attempt a proof that it is the best of all possible religions.

Manifestly this imposes an impossible condition upon the Church: she cannot surrender the conviction that hers is the best of all possible religions. But just as certainly she can surrender the claim that there is an objective proof of this absolute superiority, in the sense understood by the opponents; and can yet accept what they are exactly thinking of, when they believe they cannot maintain the absoluteness. In other words, the old way of putting the question is having pernicious after-effects, shown in the case of the Religio-historic School by its demanding such surrender; while they are apt to appear also in the case of the Church by the refusal she makes. She can not merely waive the claim to a proof in the old sense, but she ought to do so, and she will do it, if she understands her faith aright. An objective proof of the truth of Christianity that would carry conviction even to the indifferent, is neither possible nor desirable; but the only possible and relevant proof of its truth, includes the possible and relevant proof of its absoluteness. The person who has attained to assurance of faith along the way we have indicated, will also have attained to the assured

conviction, that the God who is revealed to him in Christ will never deny Himself. The Father who permits His children to know His inmost being, His holy love, by giving them the experience of it in trust, will not appear different to them in His inmost nature, in an earthly development which is undreamt of, or when this earthly existence ceases. But in this assurance there is directly involved the confidence that He will disclose Himself more fully and intimately in endless developments, in a manner which we are still altogether incapable of penetrating; but what He will thus disclose is just this nature of His, the heart of which He has already manifested to them by His revelation of Himself (cf. "Eschatology"). In no other religion are possession and hope so entirely one, as they are in ours, and no other religion has such infinite possibilities in both respects; just because it rests upon the self-revelation of the personal God of Holy Love of whom we speak. With this sure basis to start from, it transcends the boldest of evolutionary dreams. But how is this sure basis to be won? Such is the question we have sought to answer, in the whole of the proof which we have now brought to a close. It is only for the man who seeks personally to be a Christian, that the question whether his faith can be superseded, becomes vital; but for him that question has found its solution in this faith of his.

Now that we have discussed the two subjects of the nature and the truth of our religion, the proper task of Christian Apologetics is accomplished. What still remains is that we should state *the results* of our Apologetic inquiry *for the concept and the method of Dogmatics.* It was only in very general terms that we could speak upon these points at the start (pp. 29 ff.); any more detailed definition depends upon our findings regarding the nature and truth of Christianity. Only now, upon the basis of these findings, can we explain the nature of the Science of the Christian Faith, a systematic exhibition of which Dogmatics seeks to be, and show how it can be logically exhibited. Leaving all side questions out of account, we are concerned then *in the first place,* when treating of the concept of Dogmatics, with the nature of Christian religious knowledge in general, and of theological, in the present instance of Dogmatic, knowledge in particular, and with a succinct statement of its relation to other knowledge. Both points come before us in brief outline, because it is only the application of the fundamental principles in the Dogmatic System itself, that can make them fully clear. *In the second place,* when dealing with the method of Dogmatics, our essential subject is Holy Scripture as the supreme source of knowledge, with which the question of its relation to ecclesiastical doctrine is necessarily connected. The question of the

principle of division next forms the transition to the detailed presentation of the system. Those main tasks of which we speak both find their solution, when we draw the conclusions from our proof of the truth of Christianity, that is from the idea of revelation developed as the basis and norm of Christian religious truth.

THE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

The Fundamental Idea

Christian Religious Knowledge is wholly and entirely knowledge of *revelation*. In this it has *its source* and *norm* as well as *its basis*. Its content is derived from revelation, and revelation is its standard. At the same time, it is certain reliable knowledge, because it rests upon revelation. The Christian Church is not so poorly circumstanced that she cannot meet all knowledge in a sympathetic spirit: we shall take the opportunity of again emphasizing how absolutely open-minded she is, and how her attitude to all knowledge is one of queenly freedom. This attitude of openness and freedom she maintains, even in regard to all that presents itself to her as religious knowledge. But what she accepts as binding upon herself is what is derived from, and measured by the standard of, revelation; namely the definite truth which we set forth provisionally when dealing with the essence of Christianity, and which the whole of Dogmatics has now got to unfold in detail. The Christian Church is assured of this truth, because it is derived from revelation: revelation is its basis as well as its source and standard. This does not mean that Christians lightly esteem the grounds upon which other truth is accepted. On the contrary, even for the confirmation of the saving truth of religion, they

turn to account diligently and gratefully, whatever in the changeful course of history presents itself to their open minds as a new statement of the problem, or an answer that brings new light. But for the sake of the truth itself, they are diligently on their guard lest there be any confusion between what may be valuable by way of shedding new light or of explanation, and as an obvious consequence in advancing the knowledge of the truth, on the one hand, and the solid foundation on the other; so that its impregnability might be endangered.

Both truths, that revelation is the source and norm as well as that it is the foundation of Christian religious truth, hold good everywhere and always. But it is worth noticing how closely foundation and norm are connected in our religion, in revelation itself. The latter is the norm to the same extent as it is the foundation; the significance it has as norm reaches as far as the significance it possesses as being the foundation. This has great critical effect for our later exposition. In the strict sense, religious knowledge includes only what is derived from revelation, as matter which is productive of faith. To be sure, this must not be advanced at all times, with one unvarying emphasis, in reference to all the separate constituent elements: that would be trifling, and certitude is opposed to all trifling; but the fundamental position holds good without exception in reference to the whole, and under all circumstances. Where it does not apply, it must be clearly acknowledged that the limit of Christian religious conviction is reached; and Dogmatics would simply gain in confidence, if it marked off such points without reserve, and waived every appearance of omniscience, and that means here thirst for domination in the spiritual sphere. In truth, this dependence of religious knowledge upon revelation is a decided limitation and re-

straint, but at the same time it brings freedom and confidence. For it has its foundation in the very nature of the case. Suffice it to refer to the object of all religious, especially Christian, knowledge—God in His working upon us. Having this incomparable object, it aims at an incomparable certitude, for its inmost life depends thereon. No intellectual audacity on our part, nor any effort of our wills, reaches the goal with certainty, or in a manner that admits of no gainsaying. God's condescending self-manifestation, His gracious revelation of Himself, freely bestows what is altogether beyond our reach. Christian religious knowledge is interpretation of *revelation.*

But for the same reason, it is *religious knowledge,* that is knowledge conditioned by religious faith. In saying this, we are merely repeating in our present context, what forced itself upon our notice when we had to define the idea of revelation (p. 132 ff.), and what finally is the necessary consequence of the nature of our religion. It is only upon condition of trust, that the revelation of our God, who as holy love wishes to enter into personal communion with us, discloses itself. Such communion is a reality only where there is trust; and thus, only where there is personal trust, is the knowledge of personal love a reality (p. 198 ff.). The opponents of the Christian faith are fond of setting it down as an expedient occasioned by perplexity, when in this way religious knowledge is made dependent upon personal conditions. They ought rather to admit that it cannot be otherwise, if we are really dealing with knowledge of God—the God of whom we speak, whom Christians are convinced that they know from His revelation of Himself. Indeed this holds good in reference to revelation, both in so far as it is the source and norm, and also in so far as it is the ground, of religious knowledge. What in it cannot be appropriated

in trust, and thus become personally conditioned knowledge, does not belong to Christian religious knowledge as regards its compass and its nature, and has no part in the certainty which it possesses. This principle may occasion many a difficult decision in the elaboration of the doctrinal system, but as a principle, it cannot be disputed.

This personal character of Christian knowledge, as knowledge conditioned by faith, also explains the fact that in the New Testament, faith and knowledge are associated with each other in the closest possible manner, often seem to be interchanged, and come before us now in the one order, now in the other (e.g. John VI. 69, XVII. 8). That this is the case, especially in John, is explained in a formal point of view by the influence of the Greek conception of knowledge, according to which, more than with us, knowledge is an affair of the whole personality, including even the volitional and the emotional functions of the spirit. But while in the case of the Greeks, it was this that led to the well-known over-estimate of knowledge, as if knowledge of what is good made good, on the other hand, in Christianity the knowledge of God is so entirely one with personal surrender in trust to the revelation of God, that John VII. 17, to which we have so often referred, may be regarded as a short comprehensive statement of Christian Apologetics, in the form of a memorable apophthegm. And in substance John VII. 17, is the completion of the O. T. thought, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom".

Rightly understood, therefore, Schleiermacher had good grounds for adopting as the motto of his Dogmatics the words of Anselm, "I believe that I may know". This means that both concepts are to be understood in their evangelical sense, faith of personal trust in the self-revealing God, not of submission to the Church con-

stituted upon a legal basis as guaranteeing the truth, and knowledge not of a mystical vision exalted above faith, but of the comprehension which itself depends upon trust. But for this it is requisite that our religious knowledge must be understood strictly as *knowledge of revelation conditioned by faith.* That is to say, our second statement must be conceived of as inseparably one with our first. The propositions of Christian Dogmatics are not, as Schleiermacher makes them, "the outcome of the observation of Christian states of feeling, verbally expressed". On the contrary, they are the product of states of feeling evoked by revelation, or more accurately of revelation as understood in trustful surrender, or of the reality which revelation discloses to faith, namely God and His Kingdom. Without this qualification, there is no guarantee that Christian religious knowledge has the definiteness and certainty, which alone make it valuable. In short, the advance marked by Ritschl's conception of religion and revelation, over that of Schleiermacher, must be maintained, and defined for our present-day needs with ever-growing accuracy (see pp. 109 ff., 119 ff., 198 ff.).

This religious knowledge, however, which so far we have been describing in its inmost essence, has DIFFERENT FORMS AND DEGREES. Here the general laws of the manifestation of the spiritual life apply. Schleiermacher finely distinguishes the religious affirmations of poetry, of preaching, and of plain didactic statement. These all, and not as is often thought simply the two first, serve the immediate impulse of faith to confess one's faith to the glory of God, to do good to one's neighbour, and at the same time, in both of these acts, to benefit one's self. There is a whole world of Christian experience concentrated in these simple statements. We think of the deep things of sacred song, of the power of pulpit

testimony, of convincing intellectual activity, and ask ourselves what fruits the future may yet mature in each one of these provinces; for they are all full of new tasks and unsettled anxieties for us. Here we have to do with the religious affirmations of plain didactic statement. How different is the measure of definiteness which is aimed at in them, according to the several needs of the persons who give expression to them, and the circles for which they are designed: at home, in school in all its different grades, in public intercourse, in Church fellowship! And how varied are the forms even for the same grades!

But the theological, in our connexion in particular the dogmatic, presentation of Christian religious truth, is that in which the greatest possible measure of definiteness in conception, and of strict consistency between all the separate affirmations, is aimed at. What is the special characteristic of the method of plain didactic statement in general, is here systematically pursued with full consciousness. It is well, however, now to make the reservation, that this definiteness of conception, aimed at in Dogmatics, cannot get beyond certain limits inherent in the nature of the case, lest a reproach should be made against us later in our detailed exposition. In particular, it is not possible to banish the whole of the figurative or symbolical, especially the anthropomorphic, element from the language of Dogmatics; in other words, to encroach upon the rights of the imagination. The attempts directed to this end are frequently blind to the fact that their pure concepts, supposed to be purged of every trace of the material point of view, not only frequently become indistinct, but still continue to carry in themselves, though concealed, such traces of the "unscientific" method of treatment; for example, the designation of God as the being in, from, and for, Himself, which

is entirely dependent on the spatial point of view. The demand for a mode of speech absolutely unfigurative does not realize how, even in logic, human speech can designate the immaterial only with the help of words, whose roots have their home entirely in the material point of view, and how it remains a surprising fact of our spiritual life that we are capable of "apperceiving" the immaterial significance. In the other departments of the higher spiritual life, the significance of the imagination is altogether inexhaustible. This is true in a quite special degree of the personal intercourse of human fellowship, which is the best type of the fellowship between God and us. So then on the contrary it remains the great task of Dogmatics, to bring to consciousness as clearly as possible the figurative character, even of what are precisely the most important fundamental conceptions of our religion, such as Father and Kingdom of God; and then to denote as accurately as possible what faith means by them, what sort of supernatural reality it comprehends on the basis of divine revelation, and seeks to give expression to in such words (cf. p. 47 f.). In this way it only becomes more and more clear that the anthropomorphism of religion has its root, not in the illusion of human desire, but in our trust in God's gracious manifestation of Himself. Because God seeks to reveal Himself in a real way to man, He gives Himself a human form which is intelligible to men; but this corresponds to His nature. God and man become really one in religion. Such is the judgment of faith, and it is certain that it has good reasons.

But of special importance, in reference to the nature of theological and of dogmatic religious knowledge in particular, is the understanding that *in its inmost nature it is not differently circumstanced* from Christian religious knowledge in general; that is to say, that it also is

religious knowledge of revelation. The emphasis moreover now lies upon its being an understanding *of what is given in faith.* For that it is bound up with revelation follows from all that has gone before ; it cannot attain to another epistemological basis, and in virtue of it to a higher truth of God and divine things, not accessible to the "lower" knowledge possessed by faith. . . . But the inference is not always drawn from this recognition of revelation of which we are speaking, that for this very reason Christian religious knowledge, even at its highest, when it is most perfect in conception and most complete as regards systematization of form, is not exalted into a knowledge that stands superior to faith, that follows a course determined by other fundamental conditions, but remains *knowledge based upon faith.* This statement applies not only against Hegel's well-known distinction between sense-form and pure thought, but also against every preference in principle of knowledge to faith, which has appeared in the Church itself. Such was the case with the ancient Alexandrians ; so with Anselm, for whom theological knowledge is an intermediate stage between faith and intuitive perception. Such is the opinion which recurs in the case of many dogmatic theologians even of the Evangelical Church, that Dogmatics has essentially a deeper grasp of the objects of the faith, than the simple understanding of the ordinary Christian ; and it is instructive that this opinion is found independently of great differences of theological point of view in other respects (cf. for example, Dorner and Frank). This endangers the unity of the Christian Church, since those who merely believe are put in an inferior position by those who know, the Pistics by the Gnostics ; so that the Evangelical Church in any case ought to be suspicious of it. But what is more, such a distinction alters fundamentally the recognition of reve-

lation, as the sole ground and the sole norm of Christian truth, however strong the claim that one is recognizing it—indeed in the last resort it alters the nature of our religion. The reason has already been given. Our God of Holy Love wills personal communion; this becomes real in trust; only the man who has personal trust, understands the person who yields himself to personal communion; a knowledge based upon grounds essentially other than such trust, would not be personal knowledge of the God of whom we speak. In the controversy regarding the "Theology of the unregenerate," the Pietists, therefore, were right, when they emphasized personal religious trust as the indispensable foundation of true knowledge of God. Without that faith, even the person who is scientifically most capable, is fitted for the exposition of religious truth, only so far as the want can be compensated for with the help of the imagination, by supposing himself transposed into a strange world of faith. Where this also is lacking, the result is those strange caricatures in which no Christian recognizes his faith. On the other hand, the Pietists failed to perceive the distinction which really exists, and is in its way of great significance, between the immediate knowledge possessed by faith, and the theological knowledge designated above, the aim of which is to secure precision and consistency of thought, and which obviously cannot dispense with the talent and equipment necessary for this purpose.

Looked at from this point of view, a statement which in other respects readily gives offence will be intelligible. The greater precision of thought possessed by scientific religious knowledge, certainly makes it superior to general religious knowledge in this definite respect; but in another point of view, namely as regards the degree of certainty, the latter has the advantage of it. As

knowledge of faith in the sense before defined, religious knowledge is in itself certain absolute knowledge, if the word absolute is to be used here ; but it is so merely as being such knowledge of faith : in so far as it is science, it just participates in the conditionality, the relativity, of all knowing. And that is well, for this reason—it guarantees the personal independence of the believer who is not scientifically educated, as well as that of him who is. This is a fact which every dogmatic theologian should keep before him. Confidence in the eternal validity of the religious knowledge set forth by him, should go hand in hand with a modest estimate of his own scientific religious knowledge : for his Dogmatic system belongs in the next generation to the History of Dogma (cf. p. 20 ff.).

When emphasis is laid, as has been done above, on the character of all theological knowledge as dependent on faith, the opponents of Christianity are naturally fond of making the charge, that it is a knowledge undeserving of the name. This reproach is of little significance, if it can be shown to proceed from a conception of knowledge, not only opposed to the Christian, but in itself unprovable and indeed full of contradictions. This is what we have sought to prove in our Apologetic. It is more remarkable that our position as to the dependence of all Christian knowledge upon faith, is often assailed by friends of Christian truth. Not seldom on the ground that it underestimates the power and value of Christian knowledge, that it is an evasion of thought, and points to enervation on the part of faith itself. It is not in vain, we are told, that in the New Testament, knowledge is praised, recommended, prayed for. Undoubtedly so ; but surely just such knowledge as corresponds to the nature of faith, which means essentially such knowledge as we have above indicated. A knowledge based upon

another foundation, like that of which we spoke, which is said to "approximate immediate perception," has not only as a matter of fact been of little use; on the contrary, with advancing insight into the nature of knowledge and faith (cf. pp. 102 ff.) it has occasioned rather than overcome doubt. We have also seen why it cannot be otherwise, namely because it is only the knowledge which is in accord with the nature of faith, that is impregnable. But this knowledge is by no means narrow in compass and unfruitful in itself, as it is often erroneously charged with being, confined so to speak to a poor "minimum theology," a few statements incapable of development, and to be received simply on the testimony of tradition. On the contrary, it is as productive as faith itself, and as inexhaustible as its object, the living God. This is so, both in Apologetics and in Dogmatics. In every generation it has to undertake new apologetic tasks, since it has to bring its nature as knowledge conditioned by faith into relation with the culture of every generation; and its dogmatic task is equally boundless, namely the comprehension in all its aspects of the content of revelation, with ever-increasing clearness. The charge, therefore, of which we spoke, has its justification and its usefulness, not in our conception of religious knowledge, but as an urgent appeal for a more thoroughgoing application of our principles. In this sense every lamentation over the intellectual indolence of the Christian Church, is worth laying to heart, for in truth every underestimate of religious knowledge is a defect in faith. This naturally applies not merely to Dogmatics but to Apologetics, both in the fundamental part which lies behind us, and in the application of it throughout the whole Dogmatic System; which, if carried out fully and deliberately, would give us a complete Christian philosophy of nature and history.

Now with all this, the *conception of the Science of Faith* is accurately defined, in relation to the general statements made at the outset, in our preliminary remarks (pp. 2 f., 29 f.). But any short definition, in which there is no allusion to all these discussions, is liable to misinterpretation. And this too, even if it is said, without doubt correctly, that Dogmatics is the scientific exposition of Revelation as it is understood by Faith (cf. Reischle); or that it is the Science of Christian Truth, as that truth is believed and confessed in the Church, on the ground of Divine Revelation (cf. J. Kaftan), with or without such an addition as "at the present stage of the Church's development". For all the questions which have now been dealt with, and were mentioned at the outset, those implied by the idea of a Science of Faith, cannot possibly be considered in a short definition. This position of matters is made specially plain, by the fact that the summary definitions are very much alike, even in the case of writers who would not identify themselves with those associated with the theological standpoints just mentioned. Take e.g. that of Ihmels: A scientific presentation of Christian Truth which is undertaken from the standpoint of Faith, and for the Church which adheres to the Faith; this truth being viewed as it is derived by Faith from Revelation. This definition does not prevent Ihmels, in the exposition given by him, from furnishing a specific statement of the meaning of Revelation, Scripture, Dogma, which Reischle or Kaftan rejects. On the other hand, Troeltsch's definition: "An Exhibition of the Ideas of Faith on the basis of Science, of the Philosophy of Religion," does not in itself stand in any necessary opposition to those just mentioned, including that of Ihmels, though it is certain that the difference is great. However, by reference to the position which we hold, where every suspicion of external

reconciliation is precluded, these examples may demonstrate not only the ambiguity, and therefore the insufficiency, of preliminary definitions, but what is better, the far-reaching agreement which also exists; and they may bring the critical matter before us once more—that all those who are of serious mind are concerned with the understanding of Revelation which is open to faith; but of course on the supposition that the truth of Revelation must be proved, or, to go back to our commencement, that there can be no Dogmatics without Apologetics.

Faith and Knowledge

Now that the nature of religious knowledge has been defined, upon the basis of the nature and truth of our religion, it is necessary and possible to sum up in a few sentences the conclusions already given regarding the relation of *faith and knowledge*. On the one hand, we have now got beyond a series of definitions of this relation which in part have been of importance in history, and in part are still current among ourselves. On the other hand, the attitude accepted as correct can be briefly indicated by reference to these negatives.

The opinions TO BE REJECTED may perhaps be arranged in the following order. One type describes faith and knowledge as irreconcilable opponents, and rests with that irreconcilableness. Another affirms the right of the one by denying that of the other. A third wants to do justice to both, in such wise that it subordinates the one to the other in principle, seeking either to refer faith to a kind of knowledge, or knowledge to a kind of faith. A fourth acknowledges that, on this course, violence would always be done to the one or to the other, and in the end really to both; and seeks to have both co-existing with their respective rights unpre-

judiced; whether by proposing to separate the two spheres, or by discovering an escape from the difficulty in the watchword of two distinct methods of viewing the same province.

It is practically only for the sake of completeness that we refer to the *first* group. It is to relinquish all attempt at a solution, if one rests satisfied with the position of a "double truth," that a thing may be true in theology though false in philosophy. This position testifies how deep may be the feeling of inward need, which finds no way of escape from the conflict between knowledge and faith that assails the seat of life, or again it can show in how frivolous a spirit men may play with the question of Truth. Of both of these we have examples in the closing days of Scholasticism. Or again it may be a bold expression of the confidence of faith, and an inkling of the peculiar nature of faith as distinguished from knowledge. Thus in his celebrated theses on this position, Luther says that the objects of faith lie "beyond, within, on this side, and on that side of," reason. At present the catchword has been for some time a favourite weapon in party warfare, especially against the Ritschlian Theology (cf. Value-judgments, pp. 65 ff.), but is now beginning to disappear, in proportion as the theological opponents have confidence in each others' sincerity, though, taken seriously, it is absolutely irreconcilable with sincerity, for us men of to-day.

But likewise the *second* of the possibilities mentioned above cannot be maintained in the long run, the "radical solution"—the alternative of faith or knowledge. As used in the interest of faith, this watchword has been represented only by fanatics, who gave it the lie, however, in the conduct of their lives, or paid the penalty by their destruction: even for them, the world of knowledge is altogether too real. On the other hand, there is no

want of manifestoes against all faith, as blind faith which is dying out, some of them being of a spirited type, like Feuerbach's "Illusiveness of Religion," and some of a coarse description like Haeckel's "Riddle of the Universe". But the representatives of these views live after all in some unprovable faith; and, as we saw, their faith decides in the last resort for an unprovable ideal of knowledge.

The *third* group we spoke of takes us higher. We have found it was often brought home to us from history, in how many ways, as we pass from the Alexandrians to Hegel and Biedermann, faith was "exalted" to knowledge, presumably with a view to its protection and its perfect security; but really, in the last resort, since it was subordinated to knowledge, it was restricted, prejudiced, denied. We also met with the opposite possibility, though naturally much more rarely,—faith is a remnant of the knowledge which alone is right; and this knowledge itself, when viewed in its true nature, is believing, valuing, deciding with the will (pp. 134 ff.). A possibility this, which does not grant to knowledge what belongs to knowledge; as the other withholds from faith what belongs to faith.

The *fourth* of the standpoints mentioned above has certainly the most supporters; for it is distinguished by the conscious purpose of succeeding in proving that faith and knowledge are compatible with each other, while both are understood in their real nature. To be sure, one form of this attempt at a solution, one which was favoured by many people not very long ago, will now be approved only by few. It sees salvation in a *division of provinces* between faith and knowledge. This was Ritschl's view in the first edition of his work. Individual occurrences in the world, they say, belong to the domain of knowledge, the world as a whole to that

of faith. Only this satisfies neither faith nor knowledge. Faith is not satisfied, because it cannot possibly relinquish the right to pass judgment upon individual events in the world ; it is there that its temptations are fought out, and its answers to prayer experienced. To relinquish the world in individual particulars is for faith to relinquish it altogether ; a general judgment regarding the world, which must keep clear of the individual items in it, is not the victory over the world of which it is assured. But besides, faith is not content with the world as a whole, if it is just simply the world. It knows of a reality which is not the world, but higher than the whole world ; it knows of the living God : in the expression with which we are occupied, that is not recognized at least without ambiguity. But not only does faith find its claim curtailed : knowledge also must decline the proposed partition of spheres ; at least for the reason already adduced, that faith is certainly not in a position to relinquish without reservation its claim upon individual occurrences in the world. Knowledge would therefore never be sure as to where, even in reference to individual occurrences, faith claimed to fix a limit to its investigation. And whether knowledge is incapable of pronouncing any judgments regarding the world as a whole, would have to be proved at all events with more exactness than we find at this standpoint.

But the greatest popularity is attained by the thesis —not separation of the provinces, but "a twofold way of looking" at the same provinces. According to this conception, the object for faith and knowledge is the same, namely the whole of reality. But it comes before us under opposite points of view, under that of the causal explanation for knowledge, under that of the teleological interpretation for faith. The very same reality for which in the one case the efficient causes are determined,

appears in the other as an instrument for the divine purpose of salvation. Against this it must again be objected first of all that the object of faith, the reality which transcends this world, namely God and His Kingdom, is not unreservedly acknowledged; only the world which admits of the causal explanation is at the same time set in the light of teleology. But the main difficulty will be whether, by this method of treatment, expression is actually given to what faith supposes itself to experience with reference to the world. Examples from the doctrine of Providence show very clearly what is here at stake. If the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation," or, "Deliver us from evil," and at the same time the answering of it in any single instance of the Christian life, are simply links in a causal chain, so that prayer and answer have alike their basis in the necessary system comprising the whole of reality, what then is the teleological way of viewing things but a beautiful illusion, spread over the hard rock of reality? In other words, the catchword of which we speak of the twofold point of view, is not for the most part accurately explained. Then it secures in appearance the advantage of emphasizing in the strongest manner possible, the absoluteness of the causal point of view, and yet of leaving faith in possession of its rights. But in reality knowledge thus gains everything, while faith loses everything. For strictly regarded, what is affirmed is not a twofold point of view, with both aspects equally legitimate, but upon this pretext, faith is subordinated to knowledge. The one point of view is the objective, the other the purely subjective; that is, it is a beautiful illusion, and faith, which is vitally interested in the truth in the simplest sense of the term (cf. pp. 46 ff., 100 ff.), becomes subject to oscillation: not only the changing pictorial form of its conceptions, but its inmost kernel, is reduced to a figure of speech, which

must be its death; while theology becomes a sort of superior collection of phrases. But certainly this disastrous way of understanding the "twofold point of view" is not inevitable. Only, if the interpretation in question is rejected, the rejection should be unmistakable, and it should be justified. This brings us to the task of defining POSITIVELY as well, the relation of faith and knowledge, on the basis of the foregoing Apologetic.

On the basis of determinations of the volitional and emotional functions of the inner life, in combination with God's revelation of Himself in history, *faith* is assured of a reality which is not accessible to theoretical knowledge, universally valid science. Faith, moreover, sets the world of experience, which is really accessible to universally valid science, teleologically in relation to the reality of God, assurance of which is the peculiar possession of faith itself, subordinating the former to the latter as the means to the end. This activity of faith is not a subjective proceeding, but one that fits in with the real circumstances of the case, because faith can show the reasons which justify it in adopting this position. And what it is concerned about is real knowledge of the Reality that is most real of all, not by any means an obscure feeling or a postulate made by the will. All that was said above regarding religious knowledge would have to be repeated. But within the limits imposed upon it by its own nature, *knowledge* is secure against all pretensions on the part of faith, which do not cease as long as, on the other hand, knowledge endangers faith. And as in history, real knowledge first became possible through the overthrow of Polytheism, "through the victory of Jahve over Baal" (Ranke), but also in another way among the Greeks, so, for reasons in its own nature, living faith in God is the best support and truest friend

of science, and the Christian is affected with the utmost joy by every advance of it. But knowledge feels the above-defined subordination to faith (not any subordination) not as an arbitrary restriction, but as the place corresponding to its nature. For the confidence which characterizes our knowledge of nature is itself, in the last resort, a postulate of the emotional and volitional faculties of the mind, rests on our impulse to seek life, on our desire to master the world. The right to make this postulate is referred by personal faith, which is convinced on good grounds of its truth, to the living God (cf. pp. 161 f.). From the nature of this faith itself, however, we can understand what purpose is served by thus defining the relation of faith and knowledge: it promotes the interest of faith in God, which would not otherwise be faith (pp. 146 ff.).

This is by no means to say that the Christian Church does not feel even this relation of faith and knowledge as a problem; on the contrary, for the Church as a whole, as well as for every individual Christian, there is always, at every step in the development, new occasion for a great and difficult conflict of faith. The separate doctrines, especially those of God, Providence and Christ, will give us frequent opportunities of bringing up this point again. The formula must prove itself true in the particular applications of it. But its correctness in principle, as well as, in particular, the explanation of why this tension is, under earthly conditions, necessary for the sake of faith itself, and of how far, under other conditions, faith can hold out the prospect of a solution, follows directly from all that was said regarding the nature and the truth of our religion; of which these sentences profess to be merely a summary, for the purpose in front of us.

With the express reservation that every analogy must

be imperfect in such matters, the one point in our discussion which is specially contested, the question namely of how faith and knowledge can apply themselves without antagonism to the same experiences of our life, may perhaps be illustrated by the figure of the immemorial dispute between great neighbouring nations as to the borderland. To speak of "two-fold truth," would be foolish. War to the death would correspond to our second view of the relation of faith and knowledge, when each denies the other's right to exist, an irrational attitude and fundamentally impossible between such antagonists. But again, the third expedient would only be playing with words: that which makes the right of the one come to signify the right of the other. For then the dispute would begin to blaze out on the point, which of the two was entitled to the first place; because they would soon see that in the last resort, it was really a question for them of existence or non-existence, as regards their most distinctive characteristics; e.g. if the language of the one was pressed on the other by force. A separation in respect of their absolute authority might now be suggested; but what sort of division would it be, that the one nation should have general control, and the other control in the separate particulars? Nor would it be any less strange to affirm that both can rule, if only they would consider the district in dispute in different ways. For neither is much interested in the mere considering of it; but as soon as the one takes its considering seriously, it is all over with the other. On the other hand, when once the sovereignty of the one kingdom over the land in dispute is well established, the other, by submitting thereto, can exercise a profusion of the activities which belong to it in virtue of its proper individuality, with full freedom—more freely than when false and untenable claims crippled its strength. True,

there will never be any lack of new discussions ; but honourable struggle is the heart-beat of life.

Such a discussion relating to faith and knowledge as has been comprised in the foregoing, is readily taken, no doubt, to mean that it is intended in this way to forbid any higher flight of knowledge, indeed that there exists in the last resort an intolerable division in our mental life. Once again then, it may be stated explicitly in conclusion, that this charge of an unfounded limitation of knowledge would be due to a complete misunderstanding. Christian thought must apply itself with new ardour to the problems of the theory of knowledge, the philosophy of history and that of nature. This would bring to the front more and more clearly the positive significance of knowledge, its immense value in itself and for all the other activities of the inner life, religion included. But on the other hand too, the same might be said of the conviction, that knowledge itself " rests on a postulate, the right of which can be affirmed only by faith " (cf. pp. 257 f.). So then it is just on the course here recommended that the unity of our mental being is preserved.

From all that has been said, it will be possible to understand why the tempting pronouncements which we mentioned when giving the survey of the schools of modern Apologetics, and in our systematic exposition (pp. 131 ff., 146 ff.), can no more be yielded to by us at this point, when we have now concluded our definition of the relation between faith and knowledge, than at the former stage referred to,—those pronouncements which attribute more to the power of knowledge, in the direction just described. We hear the message, it is true, but we do not have faith in it. And we are influenced not only by a regard for faith, but by a regard for knowledge. Not as if the greatness of the promise did not attract us, or more

precisely, the motive from which it springs. It seems so courageous when it is said, that the view which has been expounded marks the point for retreat, no doubt ; but the troops must likewise go out to the field, must go where there is freedom, in order to give religion more power in the world. It is held that we should cultivate a new Metaphysic, the right kind which does not leave nature and spirit meaningless, or bring down the history of Jesus to a low level, and which also achieves other results that are so deserving of admiration. It is said that we need a positive reconciliation between the scientific and the religious views of the world, and that this can be attained. Or at least, connecting lines between the two are required. As if such had not really been set forth in the most deliberate manner! Or, the alleged tension between faith and knowledge is considered to be tolerable, only if it is made clear that knowledge is indispensable for faith, and faith for knowledge. Has not this too been done, so far as the position can be described in plain statements (pp. 161 f., 257 ff.)? But what forms our lasting objection to all those multiplied demands, and it is one too which is the more forcible the more extensive they are, is just this, that those who urge them do not succeed in showing that faith is not prejudiced by their proposals ; and they are equally unable to demonstrate that knowledge, which is supposed to investigate the nature of faith with precision, can clearly substantiate such claims. We may allow the former consideration to rest now as it is (cf. pp. 148 ff.). But as regards the latter, the real position is just this : the more exactness is applied by modern philosophy, in dealing with the problem of knowledge, the more it approximates in principle the standpoint which is here represented ; although it may hold itself quite aloof from the conclusions in favour of the Christian faith (cf. pp. 153 ff.).

The Science of the Christian Faith

At the transition from Apologetics to Dogmatics, we have been occupied first with the idea of Dogmatics, that is in the main the nature of religious knowledge, concluding with some general formulæ regarding the relation of faith and knowledge. There follows now what is most indispensable regarding the method of Dogmatics. Its most important problem is

THE NORM OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

It is of course a summary proceeding to set everything forthwith in this aspect. In so doing, our attention simply is to bring to the front the point of main importance, without signifying that the many separate questions of method, which here present themselves for a more detailed exposition, are in any way of small moment. But all that has gone before has in view the point of which we speak, as the main thing. If the revelation of God in Christ is the source, norm and basis of all Christian religious knowledge, and consequently of all correctly formulated doctrine, we are immediately brought face to face with the doctrine of *Holy Scripture.* For as that revelation which is productive of faith is historical for all who were not contemporary with it, it cannot become effective except through the testimony of faith to it in history; but it is just this that Holy Scripture means to be. Since then the facts of the case themselves call upon us to expound first of all the significance of Holy Scripture for Dogmatics, all the other questions, so far as they are indispensable, naturally fall into their place behind this fundamental one. This is true especially of the relation of Holy Scripture to the Confession of the Church, because in the history of the Church, Scripture has been understood and turned to account in many different ways. But while such exposition is

making plain the fact that, the reason why, and the sense in which, Evangelical Dogmatics claims to be Scriptural, we are at the same time reminded what moments of truth, if any, are present in the other types of Dogmatics which history exhibits ; and further, the most indispensable formal principles fall into their proper place without difficulty. And at this point it will appear quite naturally why we speak here in the first instance of Scripture alone, and of it only as norm ; though it is certain that a thorough-going exposition would have to estimate afresh all possible sources of religious knowledge, and the emphasis which is variously laid on them in history, and would have to determine the relation of them to Scripture.

The place here assigned to the doctrine of Scripture, before the detailed exposition of the doctrinal system, is that accorded it by the *Old Protestant* systematic theologians. It should be acknowledged to be the only appropriate place, by all who recognize in revelation the ground and norm of Christian religious truth. For it makes no difference for our question, whether Holy Scripture is identified with revelation, as was the case with our old divines, or is at once distinguished from, and related to it, as the authoritative and faith-producing testimony to revelation : in either case, it is the source of our knowledge of our faith. The position assigned by *Schleiermacher* to the doctrine of Holy Scripture, namely within the Dogmatic System itself, and there under the main head dealing with the Holy Spirit and the Church, is a consequence not so much of the reasons given by him in that immediate connexion, as of his fundamental conception of Dogmatics as an exposition of religious experience. His subtle statement that a doctrine does not belong to Christianity because it is contained in Scripture, but is found in Scripture

because it is Christian, is doubtless correct when it is correctly explained; but it admits of several interpretations. It is correct, if the intention is to say, "Because there is Christianity, on the ground of the revelation of God in Christ, there is a Sacred Scripture, the content of which testifies to that fact; the former is the real basis for the significance of Scripture". But this Revelation has to be defined with more exactness than is shown by Schleiermacher, and thus, for reasons soon to be explained, Holy Scripture belongs inseparably to it; and so far Scripture is not simply the source, speaking quite generally, of the knowledge of revelation for us, but the indispensable means of its continued activity, and is therefore, in a very definite sense, the source of that knowledge. In this sense, qualifying statements being reserved, a thing is Christian for us, because it is found in the Bible. Still more important is that other statement of Schleiermacher's, that the authority of Scripture cannot be the foundation of faith in Christ, but that faith in Christ must be already presupposed, in order to attribute a special authority to Scripture. As a matter of fact, the person who is laid hold of by Christ acquires an inward religious attitude to these writings; but that is just because it is from them, and through their means, that he receives his authoritative religious impressions of Christ. And thus far, certainly, the authority of Scripture is not the basis of faith in Christ; but at the same time, all qualifying statements being again reserved, Scripture is the basis of faith in Christ. Putting the two together, it may therefore be said that the former statement defines the relation of the Church to Scripture, the latter that of the individual believer to it, in the way which alone is evangelical, without which personal saving faith is endangered; otherwise we should be dependent upon a

dead book instead of the living God. This, however, in no way excludes Sacred Scripture from having a special significance for faith. On the contrary, upon closer examination it rather requires that it should have such significance, as being the testimony to the revelation which is the basis and norm of faith, and, on account of the manner of the revelation, an indispensable part of it. Because the relation of religious experience and revelation was not at once made clear by Schleiermacher (cf. pp. 109 ff., 118 ff., 172 ff.), he assigned the doctrine of Scripture a different position from what it had with the old divines, in the system instead of as a preliminary to it. It is intelligible that he should be followed in this by those of his successors who bring religious experience to the front, keeping its objective basis in revelation in the background. On the other hand, it is incomprehensible that the same procedure should be followed in so-called "positive" text-books, which seek to raise their structure upon the foundation and according to the standard of revelation.

As nowadays the legitimate intention of the Old Protestant doctrine of Scripture cannot be achieved without a complete transformation of it, while in the strife of parties, want of clearness in regard to it widely prevails, and often indeed, we might almost say, is artificially fostered, whether in the name of faith or of science, first of all this traditional doctrine has to be stated and criticized.

The Old Protestant Doctrine of Sacred Scripture

The understanding of this doctrine often suffers from the circumstance that in the STATEMENT of it, the arrangement customary with its representatives is followed in

too external a fashion. After briefly declaring that the only source of knowledge for theology is Revelation, meaning thereby for us modern men Sacred Scripture, they hurry away to the doctrine, carried out in its minutest particulars, of the origin and inspiration of Scripture; and then they bring forward the doctrine of its "*Affectiones*," that is peculiar characteristics. While it only becomes quite plain under the last-named heading why so enormous a claim is made on behalf of Scripture as that it is inspired, namely because it is believed that only in this way, there can be obtained an infallible authority in matters of faith, and how this conviction is originated, attention is involuntarily fixed upon the detailed statements on inspiration already made, and naturally after that directly upon the minor details of it which are so strange. In order to be fair to the old doctrine, we must therefore, in expounding it, take as our starting-point its motive and purpose, and understand the statements regarding inspiration which stand in the foreground, as a means for the end aimed at. But in the criticism, the opposite course will commend itself: the means may be perverse or unintelligible and the end nevertheless legitimate. It is only when the end itself is admitted to be incorrect, that the reconstruction of the doctrine of Sacred Scripture from the nature of Revelation, can be discussed with perfect impartiality, and it can be shown that it is by such reconstruction alone, that the motive actuating the old divines, so far as it had a sound basis, can be adhered to. In this connexion many valuable individual pronouncements of historical investigation must be left out of consideration, such as these—that the principle, "The Scriptures alone," indeed even the demand for "the literal sense," are by no means in and for themselves new discoveries of the Churches of the Reformation, but were simply given a

new application there. We are occupied only with the point which is of decisive importance for Dogmatics.

As above shown, *the fundamental interest* of the old doctrine is the anxiety for an absolutely certain source of knowledge for theology, which meant, in a way soundly Protestant in principle, for saving faith itself. Faith needs a firm foundation, a normative authority. That is revelation. But this concept of revelation, which in the doctrinal system itself, at least at its centre, men had learned to understand in a new way, starting from the concept of saving faith, continued to be understood in the Prolegomena in the old way, as the supernatural communication of saving truths. Or rather this imperfect thought was followed out, with an energy hitherto unheard of; the new power of faith gave new life to the old concept of revelation, as religiously binding doctrinal authority. In Scripture there had been found Christ, the gospel, the manifestation of God's gracious will to save. The danger now was the Romish doctrine of tradition on the one side, the fanatical doctrine of enlightenment on the other. Where was there safety from both these errors? Where was there incontestable certainty for faith? Only, it seemed, in the identification of revelation and Holy Scripture. Holy Scripture is "the only rule and standard": it is *the* normative authority. Further, before it can be this, it must be it in the strictest sense, it must be absolutely infallible. Otherwise one of the principles rejected, tradition or enlightenment, immediately presses forward; the warranty of the Church or the individual spirit—both of them in the last resort fanatical, as Luther finely said—takes the place of the self-attesting revealed God, and the sure ground of religious certainty is shattered. But if normative authority belongs to Scripture in this sense, in all that concerns salvation it must have the property

of sufficiency, of perfection ; otherwise it needs again for its completion, tradition or subjective enlightenment, or both combined in their inner oneness. In order, however, that it may be capable of being turned to account as such perfect normative authority, Scripture must also be plain and perspicuous in itself, it must explain itself, without requiring the teaching authority of the Church or special enlightenment. In short, in the three characteristics of Sacred Scripture, connected with each other as they are in the manner indicated, our old divines have given expression to the religious intention which guided them in their doctrine of Scripture. The fourth characteristic which they ascribed to Scripture, namely efficacy, gives expression to the fact that it is a means of grace, producing faith. In this expression, therefore, the deepest religious impulse which led to the whole elaborate doctrine of Scripture, has been most directly preserved. And with this agrees in the last resort what was further discussed under one of the headings already mentioned, namely that of the authority ; since alongside of the normative authority of Scripture—its being the rule and standard—mention was made of a causative authority. That is, it testifies to its own truth, it proves its peculiar authority ; or more accurately, the Holy Spirit bears witness to His work, the Scriptures, in the heart. This testimony of the Spirit works divine faith in Scripture ; all other proofs excite merely human faith, both the internal testimonies, such as its simplicity and majesty, and the external, such as the reliability of its authors, or the history of its effects.

This "testimony of the Holy Spirit" now serves at the same time and directly, as the one great proof for the miraculous origin of Holy Scripture, for its *inspiration*, the unique means, as was set forth above, to the unique end in view in the doctrine of Scripture, namely the ob-

taining of an absolutely sure basis of knowledge for faith. It is well known how the doctrine was carried out in its minutest particulars. In order that the Scriptures may be infallible, perfect, perspicuous, their real original author must be the Holy Spirit Himself; He must have dictated the facts and words to the human scribes; they are simply His instruments, penmen, secretaries. Their psychic condition during the reception of this dictated message is simple passiveness, whereas the Ancient Church thought rather of ecstasy; the latter was discredited owing to the fanatics, and it is significant that for that passive state there was coined the word "suggestion," which is now used in so different a sense. The Scriptures were proved to have had this origin by their own statements; at the same time it was not a case of reasoning in a circle, inasmuch as the reservation was made, that inward assurance of the inspiration of Scripture depends upon that internal witness of the Holy Spirit to His work, of which we have spoken; so that, therefore, the proof from the Scriptural passages already occupies the standpoint of faith.

In CRITICISM, first of all on *the doctrine of the origin*, it is best to distinguish the points which lay beyond the horizon of the old divines, and those which cannot be waived without surrender of their characteristic position. Nowadays it will be conceded without further argument, that the attestation of the doctrine of inspiration by the testimony of the Holy Spirit, which was their final proof, overlooks points of importance. Such could apply immediately only to the content, not to the origin in all its details. Further, this testimony must somehow be proved by its effects upon the subject. Again, a purely passive attitude on the part of the sacred penmen is psychologically inconceivable. But these objections partly did not exist as the matter was then regarded;

partly they were repressed by the interest already referred to in the absolute objectivity of revelation. On the other hand, even upon the old presuppositions, the question why the "sacred penmen" did not *themselves* refer to this circumstance, when once put, is not to be lightly regarded. Now, although fully alive to being really the bearers of a revelation, and able to distinguish the message given them from their own thought, the authors of the Old Testament give no indication that they were in any special condition, when in the act of writing, not even on those occasions, rare after all, when they attribute their writing to God's command (e.g. Exod. xxxiv. 27, Is. viii. 1). On the contrary they themselves testify to individual activity on their own part, by mentioning, for example, the older sources used by them, such as the Book of Jashar. In the New Testament, Revelation xix. 9 ff. is the only instance in which mention is made of a Divine command to write; and here, what the author says of himself in the context, of his falling down and speaking, certainly does not fit in with the foregoing theory. Paul, with all his assurance, not only of possessing the Spirit in general in a pre-eminent degree, but also of making particular statements directly in the name of the Lord (1 Cor. vii. 10), lays claim to no special mode of authorship for the moment of their being committed to writing. As *a direct argument against* the strict doctrine of inspiration, the express testimony (Luke i. 1 ff.) to serious literary effort in the collecting and arranging of the material, has always demanded special consideration. Such is the evidence of the authors themselves. Moreover they incontestably give us the impression of intellectual effort. The construction of Hebrews, the difficulties of the sequence of thought in every more considerable passage of a Pauline epistle, may suffice in proof. The whole

work of exegesis is a continuous refutation of the old theory of the origin of Holy Scripture, as the dictation of the Holy Spirit. Nor, finally, is it possible, since the circumstances are thus clear, to obtain by an appeal to 2 Timothy III. 16 (writings inspired of God, originating in the breath of God's Spirit) and 2 Peter I. 21, an opposite conclusion by means of the inference: if so special an origin is here affirmed of the Old Testament writings, how much more must it hold good of the New Testament. The very presupposition that the inspiration here asserted is conceived of quite as strictly as by our old divines, is unprovable. The doctrine as found in contemporary Jewish Scribism was certainly very strict. But for all that, as regards the Old Testament even, the facts as given above are more authoritative than such a judgment regarding them; and the inference to the New Testament must be completely rejected, on account of the actual circumstances of its composition. This follows too, as has been acutely shown, from the fact that allegorical interpretation almost necessarily goes along with the acceptance of inspired writings. In our evangelical Church at least, this is rejected as a matter of principle; and in the New Testament itself, in dealing with the Old, it is employed to a much smaller extent than elsewhere in Jewish and ecclesiastical literature—by Jesus Himself not at all.

But all such considerations, however convincing they may be, have not yet eradicated the old Protestant doctrine of Scripture. It is just in the case of a living Protestant congregation that one has to realize for oneself, by profound sympathy with their thoughts and needs —the actual trials frequently of the best members—how deeply the roots of that theory penetrate the sanctuary of faith. It is certainly inexcusable that theologians who might and should know the actual facts, should en-

courage such church members in their perplexity, or actually occasion them mistrust. But their own alarm, which is not due to outside influence, is only too intelligible, and it shows a lack of understanding quite as much as of sympathy to belittle it. The method of our investigation has been motived by such a feeling. In the exposition the end in view stood in the forefront, namely the infallibility of Scripture, and this was followed by the means used to reach it, namely its origin in inspiration, dictation by the Holy Spirit. In the criticism we began with the latter section; the position was proved untenable, and that not at all by our ideas regarding the matter, however strong their foundation, but on the contrary by the actual facts of the sacred writings, the consciousness of their authors indeed. Only, as long as the end in view, *the absolute infallibility of Scripture*, is regarded as legitimate, no objection to the means, the miraculous origin, takes effect. Concessions are made in regard to individual points, even at the cost of consistency. Or if this fail, perhaps the idea is affirmed as one that is necessary, although it cannot be fully followed out, and refuge is taken in the unfathomable mystery. The case is altogether different if the infallibility of Scripture presupposed, proves to be an artificial and erroneous presupposition. But this last is capable of two senses: erroneous, because asserted without foundation in the actual facts of Scripture, or without foundation in the nature of our Christian faith itself. The way is thus opened for our further progress.

The complete inerrancy of the Sacred Writings, asserted by the old divines as they thought in the interests of faith, is contrary to *the facts*. We may put first what we have already said, because it makes the most direct impression upon those who are alarmed for reasons of faith: such inerrancy is not in harmony

with the *consciousness* of the Biblical writers themselves. For while they are fully assured that they are bearing witness to divine saving truth, they make no claim to infallibility in all particulars; otherwise the statements already referred to, such as Luke I. 1 ff., 1 Corinthians VII. 10, would be meaningless, though for other reasons and in another point of view than those which we discussed before. And if at an earlier date in devout circles, Revelation XXII. 19 was frequently referred to our whole Bible as it now stands, instead of to the book of the Apocalypse, a misunderstanding so evident is disappearing even from such circles; and besides, impression is made by the knowledge that the same external emphasizing of authority, is characteristic of other Apocalypses not received into our Bible, while it is lacking for the most important parts of our New Testament. This again simply wins fresh assent to the opinion expressed long ago by Luther.

On the positive side, more importance attaches to the slowly but surely growing recognition of the undeniable individual errors, brought to light by the grammatico-historical interpretation of Scripture, which was recognized by the Reformation as alone legitimate in principle. With such interpretation criticism is inseparably connected. Even the most harmless results of textual criticism are an assault upon the outworks of the doctrine of inerrancy. It is no mere chance that conflict once raged over the legitimacy of the Hebrew vowel points, and that the most absolute recent advocate of the old claims (Koelling) not long since demanded that a commission of theologians, with expert training in textual criticism, must be kept sitting till they had settled beyond dispute disputed texts. We pass now from matters insignificant, though not without significance for the theory, to weightier points. The surest way to secure

recognition for manifest inaccuracies in the history, is here again to begin with what is obviously immaterial to faith: perhaps with the example discussed by J. A. Bengel, upon ground specially receptive of as well as sensitive to such questions, that namely of the old Wirtemberg religious fellowships. According to Mark I. 29, Jesus enters Peter's house immediately after leaving the synagogue, while according to Matthew VIII. 14, the narrative of the leper (and of the centurion) comes first, which in Mark follows the healing in Peter's house. The impossibility of subterfuge here is just as plain as the religious insignificance of the difference in the narratives; while it is the apologetic harmonizing which has invented explanations in part religiously questionable. Greater importance naturally belongs to the differences in the account of the baptism, the cleansing of the temple and the day of our Lord's death. In any case one cannot get over the difficulty in them by such phrases as, "by a deeper apprehension," "by reference to the purpose which Scripture is designed to have," such difficulties disappear (Luthardt). How much offence is thus given to the feeling for truth in young people, is startlingly shown from time to time in confidential talk; and not all who are thus caused to stumble succeed in renouncing artifices of the kind referred to in Job XIII. 7 ff., and at the same time achieving the full measure of the humility that goes with a delicate sensitiveness as to truth. A still greater difficulty for the religious sense than the differences in the historical narrative, are those in the religious testimony itself, not so much the so-called variations in New Testament theology as individual points, such as the expectation in the Apostolic writings of our Lord's speedy return. Here at all events there lies a great problem for the combining of pastoral truthfulness and wisdom. The difficulty last mentioned forces itself unaided upon

attentive readers of the Bible in the Church ; as when they hear from the pulpit that "unbelief ascribes such an opinion to the Apostles" !—an instance derived from actual experience. Thus reverent attempts to discuss the actual character of Holy Scripture, let us say before a congregation like that of the Basle Mission House (Kinzler), have a decided significance for the history of the Church. Even if at first they give offence, this must have its roots not so much in the attitude of the congregation, which, the more devout it is, learns with the greater ease to distinguish between the kernel and the husk, as in the influence exerted over them by clergymen who ought to study more deeply, and understand their calling better.

But certainly it is not sufficient to refer to the actual character of Scripture. It would be conceivable indeed that its inerrancy in the old sense must be definitely surrendered, but to the injury of faith. This possibility is excluded only by showing that the inerrancy asserted by the old divines in all particulars, is not required for *real saving faith*, or the gospel rightly understood, but is *excluded* as unnecessary, and even dangerous. It would perhaps suit a religion, the nature of which was completely expressed in individual definitely formulated doctrines, whether in individual commandments addressed to our wills, or in individual truths addressed to our understandings,—a legal religion in either point of view : it is not suited for Christianity as we came to know it, as personal communion with the God of Holy Love in the Kingdom of God for sinners, realized by the self-revelation of this God in Christ. Thus the idea of revelation which belongs to, and alone harmonizes with, the nature of our religion, is not securely established, but on the contrary injured, by the traditional identification of revelation and Scripture. The self-attestation

of God which works saving trust in God's love, the life-giving Word of the living God, cannot be the letter of an infallible Book. Were we to admit that it is, we should have to retract all that has been said with reference to revelation and faith. But the intention of our old divines, to assure the truth of this revelation and the certainty of the faith evoked thereby and directed thereto, is safeguarded because it rests upon an impregnable basis ; indeed even the erroneous attempt to carry out this intention is completely intelligible only from their earnestness. For the protection of their experienced assurance of salvation, under the temporal conditions already mentioned, they erected a bulwark, which necessarily became a source of danger : what was meant to protect against the infallibility of the Church, became a pope on paper ; what was meant to protect against the subjectivity of the fanatics, could not lead to certainty.

It is, then, admitted in principle, in almost all schools of Protestant theology, that the strict theory is untenable, both as contrary to the actual character of Scripture, and as inconsistent with the fundamental principle of the Reformation. Unfortunately, however, not only is the surrender in principle of the position frequently disguised in theological polemics, and still more in the training of the Christian Church, but worst of all, the doctrine which takes its place does not generally speaking correspond in precision with the actual facts of the case. People are much too readily satisfied with the general concession that the rigour of the old doctrine must be modified, or with indefinite talk about the human and divine character of Scripture ; though surely a matter dark enough in its own department is not calculated to throw light upon another. But if it is not possible to secure the recognition in the Protestant Church of a doctrine of Holy Scrip-

ture, which in its own way is as clear as the old Protestant, and advances the legitimate purpose of this old Protestant doctrine better than itself, the most nicely balanced individual statements regarding Scripture serve in the last resort only to break down its authority, and thus favour a subjectivity which threatens our evangelical church, because it threatens the treasure of the Reformation, the assurance of salvation. But this is threatened also, when others, in order to restrain this subjectivity, set the norm of the Church's Confession above the authority of Scripture. The safety and the future of our Church do not depend upon Romish objectivity or fanatical subjectivity, or unstable oscillation between the two, *but upon what rises superior to both dangers*, a reinstated doctrine of Scripture, starting from the nature of our religion, and in harmony with the motive principle of the Reformation.

The Doctrine of Scripture which Results from the Nature of the Evangelical Conception of Revelation

Of the two tasks, which occupied us in our exposition and criticism of the old Protestant doctrine, the one passes entirely into the background, namely the question of the special origin of the Bible. Indeed it was only by reason of the other, namely the inerrancy asserted of Scripture, that it became of such importance as actually to be the centre of interest. If, on the other hand, the question which is in truth decisive is differently answered, the question of the origin loses all direct significance for faith, and can be briefly discussed by way of an appendix. So much the more carefully must we keep in view the proper problem in all its aspects. It is the problem of special writings, excellent above others,

authoritative for faith and life—that is, just canonical; authoritative, obviously because it is they more than any other Christian writings, which afford reliable testimony to faith regarding the truth of the Christian Revelation, any more precise definition of their content being reserved. But even upon this quite general characterization of our task, three fundamental questions force themselves upon our attention. The first is, Why and in what sense is it supposed that there are canonical writings? What religious interest is thus served? The second is, Are there such writings? Is there not simply a pious wish that there were such? Or more accurately, Have the writings regarded in the Church as canonical any right to be so regarded? Thus the question of the religious value of such writings, and that of their reality, stand side by side. Finally, according to what principles are these writings, provided their value and their actual existence are established, to be employed for the construction of doctrine? Only when these three points are discussed, can a final judgment be passed on the significance of this doctrine of Scripture.

Our first question concerns THE VALUE AND THE NATURE OF CANONICAL WRITINGS. We have just spoken of it as a twofold question, asking first "Why," and then "How far (are there such writings)?" In our criticism of the old doctrine, no objection was taken to the fact that value was assigned to the canonical writings, but only to the way in which the value thus assigned was further defined, the absolute inerrancy attributed to them. Consequently it is upon this latter point that the emphasis will fall for us. But the fact is also important, and the answer to the latter question follows from it, rightly understood.

The point may be put in simple terms as follows:

Value and Nature of Canonical Writings

As the heading of the section implies, the fundamental thought of the Apologetic here advocated is, that the historical revelation of God in Christ is the basis and norm of Christian Faith, though certainly the history has this significance only for faith (cf. e.g. pp. 181 ff.). But in that case the conclusion is inevitable: for all others than those contemporary with that historical revelation which produces faith, there must be historical primary sources of information regarding it,—that is, testimonies such as are themselves parts of the historical succession of events to which they relate; for it is only from historical primary sources that historical facts can be reliably known, even such as have this high significance only for faith (cf. e.g. pp. 216 ff.), and can be fully understood only in this significance which they have for faith. Should this conclusion be rejected, the premiss must also be rejected, that our Christian faith is dependent upon the revelation in Christ. The same conclusion may be expressed in other words, as a judgment of the Christian faith in Providence, as follows: should God will to reveal Himself in history, He must also will that there should be reliable information of this historical revelation, primary sources of revelation in the historical sense, in order that the generations, who are separated in point of time from that historical event, may have their own indispensable share in the revelation.

But what will be *the nature* of such primary sources? Exactly as follows from *the character of the revelation.* This is the point where our way parts from that of the old divines, in common with whom we have maintained the necessity of canonical writings for the sake of the necessity of revelation. One cannot be too careful to indicate as clearly as possible this point of departure, alongside of the agreement in principle. Otherwise we

are at a disadvantage compared with the old doctrine. For it seems to offer more, as long as the after-effect of its idea of revelation as identical with Scripture, prevails unnoticed. This is why it is so important to define more precisely the nature of the primary source of information regarding revelation, in accordance with the better understanding of the nature of revelation. It is obvious that Holy Scripture can be a ground and norm, only in so far as it is concerned with saving faith. It is more important that even in reference to the religious content, it can hold that position, precisely as Revelation itself holds it, and in no other way. As surely as Revelation does not compel one to have faith, but produces it only in those who are receptive of its content, the same is true of the primary source of information regarding Revelation. But as surely as real Revelation alone, the reality of God as shown in action, awakens confident, saving faith in those who are receptive, and cannot be replaced by anything else, the same is true derivatively of Holy Scripture. Consequently, what was set forth regarding the relation between the content of Revelation as possessing value, and the reality accruing to it, when we were dealing with the concept of Revelation as productive of faith, has to be applied here to the relation between the religious content of Scripture, and its historical credibility. It is clear therefore in advance, how far the inerrancy of Scripture, as maintained by the old divines, is from corresponding to the evangelical concept of the revelation of God in history which produces faith ; and how important nevertheless—indeed, just for that reason—is the proof of its historical trustworthiness, rightly understood. Immediately, when dealing with our second question, whether there actually are such sacred writings, we shall have to make use of and discuss in detail all

the following : that a certain measure of purely historical probability is indispensable, and its place cannot be taken by any amount of religious value ; but that it is only in the combined operation of both factors that there arises a Christian faith certain of itself, precisely as we had to decide in the doctrine of revelation. But it is not a matter of dogmatic consideration and requirement, how the Sacred Writings in either point of view must be circumstanced in detail. On the contrary it follows from the general position, clear in itself, that the Christian faith in Providence leaves this to the Divine government of the world ; in other words, infers from the actual nature of these writings, what measure of power to work faith in their separate details, they are meant to have according to the will of God (cf. pp. 163 ff., 172 ff., 199 ff., 216 ff., 227 ff.).

Should it be objected to these statements of the significance and nature of religiously authoritative writings, that they could never represent the revelation of which they testify, never excite faith as it does itself, because the immediate activity of the Spirit is wanting, while this was fully acknowledged by the old divines by means of their view of the presence of the Holy Spirit in Scripture, that would be to overlook that the thought of the immediate divine activity of Spirit upon spirit, cannot be settled at this point (any more than formerly, when we dealt with the doctrine of revelation), nor is it meant to be excluded. Only, in any case and upon any standpoint, it is not, in our present connexion, the decisive thing ; for in dealing seriously with historical revelation, we are certainly not concerned with the mystery of immediate divine activity, but with that which is historically knowable regarding it, and intelligible to us, as was before determined.

The decisive basal principle in the present connexion

may also be expressed thus: Holy Scripture is the rule of knowledge, alike in regard to the truth of the Christian salvation and the means of grace (*v. infra*); and for the former, because it is the rule for the latter (Kirn). But in the Doctrine of Scripture, this must be determined in the precise manner which was shown in the foregoing; otherwise it appears again and again that what cannot be gained for certain from the one point of view, has to be gained from the other; and this would be incorrect. On the contrary, from the evangelical concept, strictly defined, of the revelation of salvation for faith, there follows the significance of Holy Scripture as we have stated it.

ARE THERE THEN SUCH CANONICAL WRITINGS? Such faith-producing authoritative testimonies to revelation? We sought to make their value plain, presupposing that the Church has such a possession. She affirms that she has. But with what right? Do the writings regarded as canonical satisfy the tests, which we have established in the foregoing? The question is unavoidable and insistent. From the fourth century (Athanasius, Augustine) to the middle of the eighteenth (Semler), apart from the opposition of the heretics, and the temporary reappearance in the early years of the Lutheran Church, of doubts as to matters of detail which had existed in the Ancient Church, the "Canon" settled by the Old Catholic Church,—that is the collection of primitive Christian writings supposed to form the Canon, the standard for faith and life,—held the field without opposition. In comparison with this large measure of agreement in the main point, little importance attaches to differences between the Churches of the Reformation; for example, as regards the lower or higher value assigned to the so-called Apocrypha, or the enumeration

or non-enumeration of the individual books (the former in each case refers to the Reformed Churches). But historical criticism has called in question the legitimacy of this whole tradition: both the demarcation of the compass of these canonical writings and their character as canonical, that is their special significance as based upon their distinctive nature.

The first objection concerns the question: *Are there grounds for distinguishing the writings traditionally held to be canonical, as such, from others?* There is urged on the other side the fact that the canon was established very gradually, and was completed only after many ups and downs, and that in a twofold point of view. Writings finally included were not generally acknowledged till late, e.g. the Epistle to the Hebrews in the Western, and the Revelation of John in the Eastern, Church, and a group of the so-called Catholic Epistles, 2 and 3 John, 2 Peter, Jude and James—just those to which, for the most part, Luther's free judgments in his prefaces apply. On the other hand many writings, which received recognition for a long time, were yet finally excluded, such as Barnabas and the Shepherd of Hermas, which in part still keep their position in the oldest manuscripts. But altogether one misses—and this is the ground of the facts just mentioned—a plainly recognizable standard for the inclusion or rejection, in view of the fact that the standard which prevailed at the ultimate fixing, namely Apostolic origin, in very many cases appears to us unfounded. The necessary result of this attack upon the demarcation of the compass of the authoritative writings of primitive Christianity, is the obliteration of the boundary lines between them and the non-canonical. The latter are conjoined with the former in a history of primitive Christian literature; for example, the first Epistle

of Clement and that of Barnabas with the Epistle to the Hebrews, James with the Shepherd of Hermas, and the fourth Gospel with the Gnostic movement. In this obliteration of the boundaries, the Church of Rome has less difficulty in coming to terms with historical criticism, naturally from other motives as well, but essentially in order to establish the authority of tradition alongside of Scripture.

A still greater danger in the way of the acknowledgment of writings as canonical, is the other attack which deprives those *traditionally so regarded of this property*,—the attack upon their composition by the authors whose names they bear (their authenticity), their unaltered transmission by tradition (their integrity), and above all their trustworthiness (credibility),—by reason of the wide scope given to the idea of writing in support of a particular *tendency*.

Many attempt to neutralize both types of objection, that the extent of the canonical writings is arbitrarily determined, and that the writings thus arbitrarily selected have no claim to such distinction, simply by referring to the excellence and the lasting efficacy of the content of these writings. In other words, they see in their power to produce faith (without any further explanation of the expression), the sufficient proof of the right of the Church to distinguish them in preference to the others as authoritative. It is possible to be in complete agreement with this thought in and for itself, especially when uttered with religious warmth, and advocated, in dependence upon a well-known remark of Luther's, in the form that what is occupied with Christ proves itself canonical, and that in the measure in which it is occupied with Christ; and yet it must be rejected as inadequate for the purpose in hand. For this purpose, it proves at once too little and too much, but not

what has to be proved. Too little; for as revelation works faith through its content, and through it only in those susceptible thereto, who appreciate and acknowledge its value, so also does Scripture, as the primary source of information regarding such revelation. But as revelation does this, not only through the value of its content, but through the fact that this value is realizable in experience, by the active presence of God, so also does Scripture. Consequently, historical credibility, or irrefutability, in the sense more precisely defined when we dealt with revelation, is an indispensable factor in the efficacy of Scripture; and its place cannot possibly be taken by any intensification of the other factor, the great value of the content, nor by any asseveration that this valuable experience has to be referred to God's direct, mystical working in men's hearts. The suspicion of being only a beautiful illusion would be fatal, not only to revelation, but to the primary source of information regarding it, if the question of its historical credibility could no longer be openly put and answered in the affirmative, but had to be silenced by a reference, in itself perfectly legitimate, to its inherent value; even this value would no longer be the same, when divorced from reality. But the thought of "being occupied with Christ," also proves too much. Measured by such a standard, without doubt individual portions of the later literature, and these certainly not simply the earliest, would have to be placed alongside of, and indeed preferred to, the canonical, that is to say to individual portions of it. Clear evidence of this is furnished by the use, in wide circles of the Christian Church, of many books of hymns and prayers. Still who would base his faith on these, or make them the supreme standard of it? They themselves require a sure standard, and an immovable basis. But if this basis and norm are

found in the historical revelation, and if we who come after have part in it only through the testimonies regarding it, these can prove themselves authoritative, canonical, only in the same way as the revelation itself.

A peculiar application of the thought, that the efficacy of the writings distinguished by the Church as canonical is a sufficient proof for the honour assigned them, is the following: these writings prove themselves canonical, because in the circumstances of the primitive Church, they portray all the circumstances that can conceivably affect the Church in later times, and furnish it with the light necessary for the whole course of its existence in time (J. Chr. K. Hofmann). The idea is thus, so to speak, objectified; instead of individual experience, we have the experience of the Church continually verifying itself in history. This idea is not only grandly comprehensive, but for faith indubitable, though it is insufficient as a proof of the canonicity of the writings traditionally regarded as canonical. At all events, it would require qualification, as for example all the circumstances conceivable are certainly not portrayed within the compass of the primitive church, seeing that very many of those which have actually arisen in history were not then in existence. But the main point is that the position meant as a proof falls into an objectionable circle. For obviously it can be shown only at the close of the Church's earthly course, whether these writings have always done her the service mentioned: meanwhile the statement remains a hope of faith.

The *pertinent answer* to the question whether we really have canonical writings, and whether they are those selected by the Church, is for us a simple consequence from what has been already adduced regarding the nature of revelation, and the nature of the primitive sources of information concerning revelation, which ex-

actly corresponds thereto. We have to ask whether in our so-called canonical writings, we have writings which possess the two characteristics which we have repeatedly mentioned, and which, inseparably united, constitute the essence of primary sources of information regarding revelation, because they constitute that of revelation, and are capable of exciting saving faith.

The one point is to be confirmed by purely historical investigation, and upon no seductive pretext must a judgment founded upon faith intrude here. Only that historical investigation must not forget its own proper nature, nor the limits which we discovered, when considering the question of the historical reality of revelation (pp. 216 ff.). In harmony with what was there adduced, the following is the important matter. The writings combined in our New Testament go back for the most part to the infancy of the Church, before the appearance of the great heresies and the origin of the Old Catholic Church, which was conditioned thereby. Among them are sources of the first rank, understanding the word in the historical sense, or at least such recognizably lie at the basis of these writings. The latter statement applies to the Logia in the Gospels, and the former to the admittedly genuine Pauline Epistles. The uncertainties of many kinds in matters of detail, however, and the changing but growing insight into the facts of the case, correspond exactly to the nature of history as well as of faith, provided that the two entities understand their own natures accurately (cf. pp. 216 ff.). But the purely historical investigation of Holy Scripture permits of these general positions being construed yet more precisely. Not only those primary sources of the first class, but even writings probably more recent, perhaps contemporary with many rejected by the Church (e.g. Hebrews compared with 1 Clement and Barnabas), have in com-

mon, though again in very different degrees (as is always the case when dealing with matters of actual history) a peculiar characteristic which other Ancient Christian literature is without, or does not exhibit so markedly; what has been called their particular relation of dependence on the Old Testament. That is, they understand the religion of Israel, especially its prophetic stage, as actually preparatory, but also as merely preparatory, revelation. Now on account of the early Judaizing and Hellenizing of the Gospel, this individual peculiarity cannot be understood except as a testimony to the original understanding of the revelation in Jesus, consequently as His act, His understanding of the Old Testament, derived from Himself. Thus the tact of the Ancient Church in the settling of the canon is justified on the lines of purely historical investigation; and once more the many vacillations, transitional positions, and exceptions, confirm the general impression. It will grow in the measure in which the influence of the most important Old Testament writings, e.g. Deutero-Isaiah and the Psalter, upon the most important writings of the New Testament, is systematically investigated. And in connexion with such investigations, the apposite dictum would certainly come to its own: An attempt to preach as often upon the Apostolic Fathers as upon the New Testament pericopes, would make us alive to the special character of the latter (W. F. Gess).

So much concerning the point that the one characteristic of canonical writings, historical credibility, may be proved of those regarded as such by the Church, in the measure and within the limits of which the circumstances admit. Nor would it be difficult now to discuss how far they are possessed also *of the second* fundamental characteristic. Essentially these writings, by the value of their contents, approve themselves as the most effi-

cacious religiously, as the writings most "occupied with Christ," from which, in the personal life as well as in the history of the Church, all the deepest revivals have proceeded.

We come lastly to our third question: *How have we* TO EMPLOY THESE SACRED WRITINGS in Dogmatics? Old Protestant Dogmatics found the answer to this question also in its identification of Scripture and Revelation, and its view of the inerrancy of both. Among things dictated by the Holy Spirit, there cannot be in principle any gradations of validity. There can only be varying degrees of clearness, produced and intended by the Holy Spirit Himself. Each separate doctrine thus has its own "classical passages"; each has its "seat" in Scripture; a start is to be made from this, and the other statements are to be understood according to it. But this use of Scripture, which was meant to establish its position as the only standard, led to precisely the opposite result. For since the individual passages of revelation were treated in isolation, and as in principle of equal value, so that the only possible way of understanding a complex entity in its essential unity—that namely of harmonizing the many statements with the help of straightforward verbal interpretation — was closed, a start was made from the classical passages, on the plea that they were most distinct; but that meant in reality from the passages which seemed to contain most clearly the opinion prevalent in the Church. Thus quite different principles were admitted into the Dogmatics constructed in intention solely upon the basis, and according to the standard, of Holy Scripture (cf. pp. 102 ff.). For us on the other hand, after all that has been said regarding the value and nature, as well as the actual existence, of canonical writings, it is obvious that their content pos-

sesses many varying degrees of value ; and consequently that it can be made use of in Dogmatics, only when that is accurately taken into account. Here again it is only this that corresponds both with the actual facts of Scripture, and a genuinely Christian concept of revelation. If, in the interests of faith, there cannot be any revelation which compels assent upon grounds of logical necessity, neither can there be any testimony to it so homogeneous in itself and so uniformly authoritative, that it would be superfluous for the believing community to test what is authoritative in the first degree, what in the second, and what in the third, what belongs to the inmost essence, and what does not. And what thus follows from the nature of the historical revelation as designed for personal saving faith, follows likewise from its historical character as such ; because history without variety, gradation of light and shade, *nuance*, is not real history. Thus in dealing with Christ as the self-revelation of God, we have already reached the conclusion that this significance does not belong to the whole of His historical manifestation, in all its parts alike (cf. pp. 210 ff.). This has now to be exhibited in greater detail, with reference to the separate layers of the New Testament tradition.

First of all, we have to deal with *differences common* to them all, which may be mentioned here in advance, to prevent the necessity of continual repetition. Firstly, such a distinction holds among the affirmations of the primary sources of revelation (by which we are always to understand both the facts recorded and the judgments relating to them), according to whether their content is religious, or pertains to the wider circle of human relations in general. Secondly, in matters religious we have to distinguish between what is original, strictly individual, and what is popular, belonging to the

age. Thirdly, in the decisive religious testimonies themselves, the distinction forces itself upon our attention, as to how far they are direct evidence, or merely serve in some way to explain the direct evidence. Fourthly, here again there are differences of expression, which may present itself as a full correspondence between form and content, or in such wise that there is disparity between the idea and its dress. Finally, there are obviously elements in common, elements of identity, and individual peculiar elements, and that not only in the different groups, but also in the different writings. It is not difficult to find instances of all these; but first of all it was advisable to mention the unassailable fundamental positions as such, because controversy readily arises at once regarding the particular instance. Besides, they acquire full significance only in their application to the questions which are properly decisive: how are the writings which belong to the New Testament tradition related to one another? How is the New Testament related to the Old?

What, then, is the relation between *Jesus Himself and His Church*, His life and work in the light of His own testimony, and the testimonies borne to Him by the faith of His Church? Is it possible to distinguish the two at all, and yet to understand them in their inner unity? Are they not rather to be entirely separated or entirely identified? Taking the latter first, it is affirmed in opposite senses—to use the common party cries for the sake of clearness, in the positive orthodox and in the negative critical sense. On the orthodox side again in two forms: either in the sense of the Old Protestant doctrine of Scripture, according to which every apostolic word is alike infallible with every word of the Lord, a thesis which, as we saw, never was and never could have been seriously applied in the use of Scrip-

ture for Dogmatics. Or with much greater refinement of thought, it finds expression in the watchword of the "whole Biblical Christ". It is only through the community of believers, it is said, that we know of Jesus, and this is just as it should be: the person whom faith understands is the really historical Christ. We have already shown in another place (pp. 209 ff.), how much truth there is in this position, upon grounds not only of faith but also of history, and in what sense we admit it; but at the same time with what reservation. In our present connexion this necessary reservation is perhaps more intelligible to many, because the position granted absolutely, can be, and quite frequently is, applied in the opposite interest. That is to say, in order to prove that by way of history we know nothing of Jesus, because we have only the uncontrollable evidence of what His Church believed regarding Him: that would be nothing less than the death of faith, and on the other hand an attitude by no means to be verified on historical grounds (pp. 216 ff.). We thus naturally come to those others, who on the other hand oppose the testimony of Jesus and that of His Church to Him to one another. He Himself, they think, aims only at being the first believing member of His Church, in no sense the object of its faith; whether this be held in the sense of Lessing's Christianity of Christ, or in connexion with the theory of evolution in its most modern form.

Rising superior to both extremes, the identification of the two entities, Jesus and the Church, and the setting of the one against the other, we must take our stand, making good their diversity in unity and their unity in diversity. This is in keeping both with the faith which understands itself and with unprejudiced historical investigation. We must start from the unity; for what use would faith have for a revelation misapprehended

as regards essentials? Besides, on grounds purely historical would not adequate cause be wanting for the wondrous testimony of the Church? But this unity leaves room for diversities. What sort of revelation would it be in which the bearer was not superior to the recipients, and these too had not matter of their own, as they appropriated the revelation by the free use of their personal faculties? And what sort of history, in which there was nothing characteristic and new, springing from the creative source? Without anticipating details, this unity between the two entities, which endures or rather demands inner diversity, may be expressed in a general statement. Inasmuch as for Christian faith Jesus is the definitive self-revelation of God, and the earliest Church, educated and guided by Him, is the intelligent recipient of this revelation, the testimony of both is of equal value, if and in so far as that of the Church does not lag behind that of Jesus; or if it goes beyond the latter, but can yet be regarded as an understanding of Jesus' testimony intended by Himself. Whether a case of lagging appears in Paul's judgment regarding marriage, or the other relation can be asserted of the fundamental characteristics of the apostolic Christology, are obvious particular examples which, like all particulars, can be decided only by special investigation. The problem as a whole is notoriously a question of the hour, under the title "Jesus and Paul," and is discussed from all the points of view mentioned. Here it is more needful to point out further, that it will not do to describe the Gospel of Jesus as the highest standard for appeal, if one understands by it essentially the verbal testimony of Jesus merely, whereas we saw that the concept of God's self-revelation is realized in His personal life as a whole.

In every special investigation, both with regard to

the testimony of Jesus and that of the earliest Church, and their relation to one another, the general principles above set forth next come into consideration. They have taken longest to gain a footing in their application to Jesus' own testimony, without however being seriously opposed yet as principles: the controversy turns upon the particular application. That what is simply transferred from the general culture of the time, in reference to nature and history, is not normative, will be universally admitted. But it is difficult to define the boundary line between such matters and the province of religion, for example in reference to demonic possession, or to the particular statements regarding the Parousia. In general at this point we can only reach the position: Jesus' testimony is normative, in the measure in which it is connected with His self-consciousness and His consciousness of His vocation, as central. A statement like Mark XIII. 31f. shows at once limitation and freedom. In comparing the testimonies borne by the faith of the earliest Church with each other, special importance attaches, among the principles already set forth, to that of the distinction between testimony and proof. A proof such as that in Galatians IV. will not be regarded by any evangelical theologian as normative: as regards expositions of details in Christology, there is lasting dispute. That under certain circumstances even what is individual can have lasting significance, is clear by reference to the Pauline doctrine of Justification; and how often elsewhere in history, has the Church learned to understand anew what has long been relegated to the background?

We come now to the relation of *the Old and the New Testaments.* A word on this subject is the more indispensable, because in the interests of brevity attention has hitherto centred almost solely on the New. Here again the best introduction to the proper attitude which

results from the Christian idea of revelation, is to recall the two extreme views. The extremes are the worthlessness in principle of the Old Testament for Christians, on the one side, and its being regarded as of equal value with the New, on the other. The former is found, for example, in Marcion, and "the Marcion of the Newer Theology," Schleiermacher; in the latter, not from his indisputable position that the Old Testament writings do not share the normative dignity of the New, but on account of his underlying view of the history of religion, according to which Christianity, as regards its historical existence and its aims, occupies a like relation to Judaism and Heathenism. The over-estimation of the Old Testament, the regarding of it as of equal value with the New, may take the form either of a Christianizing of the Old Testament or a Judaizing of the New: the latter applies more to the Church of Rome, the former to Protestant orthodoxy and to religious lay circles. The following principles are a necessary consequence of our fundamental position. As certainly as we, being Christians, see in Christ the perfect revelation of God, for Christian Dogmatics only the New Testament primary sources of this revelation are directly authoritative. No Christian doctrine therefore can be derived from the Old Testament alone, such as for example the restoration of Israel as a nation from the Prophets; and every statement of the Old Testament made use of in Dogmatics at all, must be understood in a Christian sense, with the Christian faith as central, for example in the doctrine of God and Sin. But just as certainly as the revelation in Christ is the perfection of the Old Testament revelation, the former cannot be correctly understood without the latter; every Christian doctrine must be traced back to its Old Testament roots, and made intelligible from them—think of such important New Testament ideas

as "Son of God," "Kingdom of God," "Justification". This attitude, consistent in both points of view, corresponds to that of Jesus Himself. He is come not to destroy but to fulfil: the God of the fathers is His Father, but as Father to the Son Who alone knows the Father. The Old Testament is His Home, but it is also the Son's Home: His binding relation to it is closer than any other finds for himself; but for that very reason it is also a relation of greater freedom. Because the Old Testament was to Him the Word of God, and as such His Father's Word, it also experienced and endured His spiritual criticism; and as this Sacred Scripture was appropriated by Him, so is it also by us. In regard to matters of detail, serious questions naturally arise here too. For example even those who have not felt themselves bound to accept the Davidic authorship of Psalm cx., on account of its use in Matthew xxii., are not always equally prepared to forego a judgment regarding the history of the Patriarchs, by reference to Matthew xxii. 32. But the fundamental idea is sufficiently firm and clear to surmount such questions of detail; and even in the practical sphere, in association with religious Guilds, as well as in the manifold difficulties of catechetical instruction, it is beginning to show itself fruitful. In Christian Ethics, it has already been followed out more generally than in Dogmatics; in the former too, the application of it in some measure can be illustrated more easily by particular examples (cf. "Ethics," pp. 117 f.).

It is almost simply for the sake of completeness, that we mention that our whole doctrine of Holy Scripture has so far concerned itself with only one of the problems which our old Divines used to discuss under that head, namely the authority of Holy Scripture. Indeed on account of the altered conception of the authority, so

far as we are concerned, the other problem, that of the ORIGIN, *the inspiration*, the latter term being understood in the strict sense, has now retired completely into the background: it is not a question of faith, it is merely a subject for Christian study. As such it is not illumined by indefinite forms of expression, as for example by speaking here of the human and divine origin (as before of the human and divine character), which is manifestly not a solution, but only a naming, of the problem, and little appropriate even for that purpose. It is more profitable, in dependence on Schleiermacher's idea, to speak of the inspiration, not of the writings, but of the authors. The peculiarity of their writings is to be understood, we are told, in a material point of view, as the original impression made by the image and spirit of Christ, and in a formal, by referring to the distinction between what is given to them, and the products of the authors' own reflection or study. In the second place, we may think of them as filled in a specially intense degree with the Spirit of God and Christ, in the most important moments of their activity at their vocation in general, but especially in those of their writing, which, not for their own consciousness it is true, but in God's intention, had the significance which we have just explained for the Church in all ages. Only we must never forget the limits to which we have frequently referred, as pertaining to the essence of our religion; that is, in our present connexion specifically, we must not think of their psychic condition as a passive one. This activity too was service, and service is the highest form of personal activity, the more so, and not the less, according as "it is God who there works". Indubitable examples of how work and gift coincide just in their highest manifestations, are furnished by the testimonies of creative geniuses in other provinces as to

themselves. In some such way as this perhaps, Christian reflection may seek to give appropriate expression to the fact, that we naturally speak of those words of Holy Scripture as inspired, which are most fruitful in their effects; and where others speak of sub- or superconsciousness, it has good right to speak of the Spirit of God. But when in this connexion striking expressions, as, say, Kierkegaard's declaration that, when he was moving on the loftiest heights of his literary activity, he "has thought that he was copying out of a book," are made use of without examination as evidence for the purposes of Dogmatics, neither is the doctrine of the old divines justified by such means, nor is the actual situation cleared up for us.

We must not, however, bring our doctrine of Scripture to a close with such reflections, belonging to the outside limit of what faith is interested in, but with a simple recapitulation, once more, of the FUNDAMENTAL IDEA regarding its authority. The aim is to overcome the uncertainty, which cannot be evaded either by holding fast the old doctrine or by giving it up, unless something definite takes its place. It cannot be evaded by holding fast the doctrine. For as we saw, in the original sense of the old divines this has become impossible, both by reason of the actual character of Scripture, and as a result of the consistent application of the idea of Revelation and faith held by the Reformers. Scripture is not a textbook of Dogmatics nor a "Catechism of doctrine," as the orthodox renovators of the old theory will have it. But no more is it an Introduction to the History of Revelation, as with the Erlangen theology, at least on one of its sides; nor is it simply the "Foremost Book of Devotion," (as with the Religious Guilds, often associated lately with the renovation of orthodoxy just

alluded to). All this neither corresponds to its actual nature nor satisfies the actual needs of faith. Consequently, it is not surprising if such views of Scripture, which readily emphasize their opposition to all exaltation of self above Scripture, their subjection to the word, imperceptibly either fall into an arbitrarily subjective use of it, or are compelled to set the Confession of the Church above it, as a standard for it. On the other side, the frank surrender of the authority of Scripture, the regarding of it as the important but not normative memorial of the initial stage, with the "Liberal Theology," without doubt undermines the certainty and definiteness of faith. It unwittingly gives religion a fanatical or mystical, but in either case a subjective, character. Besides, whether for its own part it sees in this an advance, or a loss that cannot be avoided, the result is something different from the Christianity which has proved itself a real power in history; while uncertainty is introduced into the practical sphere, especially in regard to the *problem of the relation of Christianity to culture.* Consequently it is not strange that occasionally, such subjectivity is found to adopt an attitude of out and out Conservativism in reference to the ecclesiastical order. Yet this view of Scripture, which endangers the security of faith, according to which Scripture is simply a memorial of the initial stage of our religion, cannot prove that it is demanded by historical reality; on the contrary it exhibits, sometimes with more sometimes with less clearness, an admixture of historical and dogmatic principles.

In opposition to both dangers, with our carefully defined idea of revelation as our starting-point, our aim is to understand Holy Scripture as the authoritative original testimony of faith to revelation—a testimony which necessarily goes therewith. If it be seriously

held that we as Christians are always dependent upon the historical revelation, that our faith in God, in its distinctively Christian form, has its basis and standard in Jesus Christ—and it was shown why this must be seriously held, if definite Christian faith is to be taken seriously—then there must necessarily be a reliable testimony to the Christian revelation: the one position cannot be maintained, while the other is rejected. But faith does not require some sort of testimony contrived out of our own thoughts: it requires one in correspondence with the nature of the revelation we possess, working faith in it. And it is just such a testimony, no vague kind, that history affords, and which it alone can afford. Faith does not wish anything and everything from history, but something simple, yet definite; and this definite something history furnishes, or is capable of furnishing. But if it were to be objected that we know the nature of revelation only from Scripture, and consequently are moving in a circle, we have to point to our previous discussions on the nature of Christianity and on Revelation.

If now the same objections are raised against this doctrine—derived by us from Holy Scripture—which it seeks to avoid, if, that is to say, to some it appears unstable in its subjectivity, while to others it appears much too dogmatically objective, the latter objection needs no further refutation here. It is in principle that which we have assailed from the beginning, the objection to faith in the perfect revelation of God in Christ, with which our religion stands or falls. But the other objection needs further consideration, which serves to clarify the fundamental idea. It does, as a matter of fact, present the appearance of subjectivity, in the consciousness of all who maintain the old doctrine, though they do so at the cost of their consistency. But this appearance

may be shown to be mere appearance. From the manifold testimonies of Holy Scripture, which in very different degrees (p. 277 ff.) are faith-producing testimonies of faith to revelation, the Christian Church, in the course of its progress through time, gains under its changing, manifold, experiences and tasks, which however (according to Christian faith) are all directed by the Providence of God to one goal, an ever clearer and deeper, as well as more complete, understanding of the nature of the revelation bestowed upon it, testified to in Scripture and efficacious. If we so choose, we may speak of *the nature of our religion, as it thus progressively comes to our knowledge*, under the name of its principle, the consistent idea of it. It is, however, not an idea which is a product of reflection, a manufactured thing. On the contrary in the actual history of our religion, the deeper understanding of the idea of it has always sprung from the testimonies which faith has given regarding its actual origin. *It is just this which becomes anew the standard whereby the separate statements of Scripture are measured, according to the position reached by each age in the understanding of the idea.* The old Protestant fundamental principle that Scripture is the Interpreter of Scripture, is consistently applied in a manner corresponding with the nature of faith. It would be well worth while to work out this thought in a general survey of the history of the Bible, based however upon accurate knowledge of the particulars. This would have to be done, not only on the side upon which, with reason, attention is first fixed, the enormous influence exerted by the Bible upon the development of the race, but also with the other aspect in view, the influence which the development of the race has had upon the understanding of the Bible, the way in which the history of the understanding of the Bible presents itself as a great process of simplifi-

cation, but at the same time of deepening—an ever-deepening comprehension of its inmost substance, that is of the revelation to which it furnishes the testimony of faith.

Such is the *objectivity* valuable to and indispensable for faith in relation to Scripture ; such is the objectivity possible without prejudice to truthfulness. What *subjectivity* still remains need not be glossed over, or apologized for : it is the subjectivism of life—of life at its highest, the life of faith, or of personal communion with the personal God.

To the passing glance, not to mention the hostile or unintelligent one of opponents, what first obtrudes itself in such evangelical attitude to Holy Scripture is certainly always the singular, the accidental and the arbitrary ; a deeper look into the history always proves this impression incorrect. The advances denoted by such names as Augustine, Francis, Luther, Bengel, and Schleiermacher, however different from each other, have nevertheless all been advances in the understanding of Holy Scripture, which have led to a deeper conception of the nature of our faith, and brought the particular into the light of the new knowledge of fundamentals. How little in keeping with faith, then, as well as how poor, appears the demand that God *must* have given us a Holy Scripture inerrant in every particular ! In personal Christianity, in reference to Divine Providence, this *must* ranks as *unbelief*. Nor is it otherwise with the Church. It is often thought that the two cases can be made out to be different, by drawing the distinction that our personal life can endure the riddles of Providence, just because it has the inerrant Word as the sure basis of its faith. To be sure it has. But the actual character of the Holy Scripture furnished by the Providence of God, determines the nature of this inerrancy, how far it

reaches, and how faith becomes assured of it. It is by temptation, conflict, and resignation, that faith learns to understand it in this its actual character as the entity corresponding to itself; while that type of Scripture which is demanded and is said to be necessary, could not for all time, amid all the mutations of history, in the presence of all the new tasks, furnish faith with what it requires.

Now that this fundamental position has been clearly laid down, the doctrine of Scripture may close with a thought which is calculated to reconcile even the hesitating, without in any way endangering the attitude hitherto taken. In every single case Dogmatics has to consider as accurately as possible, whether it is exhausting the full riches of Scripture at that stage of general knowledge regarding our faith which is accessible to it. The more carefully it exercises such self-criticism, the better adapted will it be for true progress in detail even in non-creative periods, even in the days "of small things," and at the same time, though only in the slightest measure, for paving the way to a new stage in the knowledge of the faith. By thus exercising itself, instructed by history, it will also learn, especially upon the points which in their nature approach the limits of mundane thought, to value just those testimonies of Scripture which are little in favour with the current frame of mind of the age. This work is imposed upon us by the principles we maintain regarding Scripture, as the faith-producing testimony of faith to revelation, necessarily accompanying it.

Holy Scripture and the Confession of the Church

Our doctrine of Scripture also gives us the answer to the question, whether the Confession of the Church can be

the basis and norm of Protestant Dogmatics. The answer is that in principle it cannot, but it is an answer, which, if there be no doubt regarding its acceptance, not merely permits us to do justice to the great relative significance of the ecclesiastical authority, but actually postulates such significance. It is by no means superfluous, even in the Evangelical Church, to emphasize the fact that in principle *the answer is in the negative.* In the latest of our Confessions, which expressly goes into the Problem, in the Preamble to the Formula of Concord, with reference to the Dogmatic rule and norm, we find sentences side by side which, taken strictly, nullify one another. Clearly in the forefront stands the Scriptural principle : Scripture is the sole norm and rule ; and plainly and without ambiguity, it is immediately applied to the Confession in question in the words, that it is the unanimous decision according to Holy Scripture, of the men then alive, regarding the controversies which had arisen in the Evangelical Churches. But then it goes on to say that this decision is to hold good and endure for ever. In truth there is here a dilemma which there is no escaping. Either the decision is reached according to Scripture as the supreme standard, in which case it manifestly holds good, as long as its harmony with Scripture can be clearly proved. Or it holds even without this condition ; in which case it is undeniable that a decision of the Church is set over Scripture. This dilemma is not got rid of, even by the distinction so nicely drawn between the Norma normans (Scripture) and the Norma normata (the Confession) : for if the harmony of the Confession with Scripture can be proved, the distinction is worthless : if it cannot, Scripture is dethroned from its authoritative position. Obviously the authors of this dogmatic formula as well as of those sentences of our latest Confession, acted in the full assurance that

such harmony could never be denied; but nevertheless the sentences remain contradictory in themselves, and we know well how harmful they have been in practice. For no one can stand by all the separate pronouncements of the Confessions, e.g. the damnation of unbaptized infants in the second article of the Augsburg Confession. Again, the want of clearness in principle opens the door for caprice; for some deviation or other, every one may be suspected of disloyalty to the Confession—say, for rejecting the unio mystica as defined in the Formula of Concord. But if, in order to justify this state of matters, it be said that there is general agreement as to a certain measure of agreement between the confessional and the scriptural, a proof of this assertion may reasonably be demanded, provided that the recognition of the Scriptural principle is taken seriously.

Our view of the authority of Scripture not only thus absolutely negatives every attempt to subordinate Scripture to any interpretation of it found in history, but at the same time assigns *high value notwithstanding to the Confession of the Church.* It is a matter of the application of what was said above regarding the progressive understanding of Scripture in the Church, a position based upon faith in the Revelation of God as authoritative for all times. Now for us the Reformation of the sixteenth century is the most important stage, because, according to reasoned conviction it is so far the highest, reached in this understanding of Scripture, viewed in its main scope. The primary documents of the Church of the Reformation as it came into being, are consequently the indispensable guide to the Reformers' view of Scripture, but not that we may maintain that view as something final and definitive. On the contrary, upon the basis of it and in connexion with it, our knowledge of the inexhaustible riches of Scripture,

as the testimony of faith to revelation, is to be deepened, and these riches are to be turned to account for us and our present-day needs. It is only when we have constructed the System of Dogmatics that the meaning of this principle can be made plain. Still it is worth while to remind ourselves even at this stage how careful we must be in the precise determination of it. For example, to take the bearings of the Reformation mainly from Paul's conception of the Gospel, is certainly a proceeding which cannot be abandoned; but it is as true that we may come to be fettered by it. The needs and the results of research at the present day are ministered to, when we deliberately make use of the Synoptics at the same time.

It follows naturally, therefore, from what we have stated what theology, and in especial what Dogmatics, is of a "churchly" type, and what is not. The application to the duty of teaching which falls on those who serve the Church, has to be made in Ethics and Practical Theology. But without a clear Dogmatic basis, these disciplines cannot permanently do justice to the practical needs.

The strict supremacy of the principle of Revelation, and of the Scriptural principle by way of derivation therefrom, excludes from the decisive position in the defining of the basis and norm of Christian faith, not only the Confession of the Church, but also *the other possibilities* spoken of in our Apologetics. At the same time, however, it secures for them too their relative right, more certainly and distinctly than the seemingly stricter emphasizing of Scripture in the old Protestant Dogmatics. It has been shown how in the latter, reason and religious experience, though unacknowledged, made themselves felt all the more, and that in a dangerous way. What they really mean for Evangelical Dogmatics follows

naturally from the survey there given. Only what then came before us under the apologetic point of view, would now have to be stated in detail under that of the methodology of Dogmatics. Leaving this, attention may further be directed to some of

THE RESULTS FOR THE METHOD OF DOGMATICS IN DETAIL

The Evangelical Church knows no other system of Dogmatics than a Scriptural one, as certainly as Christian religious knowledge is an understanding, conditioned by faith, of the *Revelation* to which Holy Scripture is the necessary accompaniment, as being the faith-producing testimony of faith thereto (p. 240 ff.). But evangelical Dogmatics, although in this sense it has in Holy Scripture its supreme Norm, cannot be merely an ordered presentation of the contents of Scripture: it cannot be identical with *Biblical Theology*, as certainly as this is its most direct preliminary, and the two, as they advance, are continually acting and reacting upon one another. It may be said that a series of once highly esteemed Dogmatic positions have become for ever impossible, through the progress of New Testament Theology; the peaceful labours of New Testament Theology secure, slowly but surely, what is beyond all the mighty powers of the Church as an organization. But yet Dogmatics is not the best Biblical Theology of the day. In the first place, because the latter is always a historical science in the strict sense, whereas the former aims at setting forth the religious knowledge which is valid for us, which we can attain by the understanding of Revelation as a whole, as such understanding is accessible to us at the stage we have reached in our historical development—a point already discussed at the close of our doctrine of

Scripture. Further, because Dogmatics, as systematic science, strives after the greatest possible definiteness in its ideas, as well as in the combining of them into an ordered whole.

Next, reference must be made to the fact that a place must be found within the Dogmatic system itself for *apologetic details*, namely at all the points, towards which the opposition of other convictions is directed with special emphasis, or according to the favourite way of putting it, the opposition of "Science". At all events, to banish them entirely from Dogmatics and confine them exclusively to Apologetics, is not in accordance with practical requirements, inasmuch as the opposition of our adversaries and the need to meet them are most pressing at those particular points; nor is it in accordance with the requirements of science, because otherwise the attack and the defence are apt to be left in the realm of the unknown and general. Only it is obvious that in such sections of the Dogmatic System, no grounds can be introduced for the certainty of faith other than those whose legitimacy was proved in the Apologetics. In other words, the idea of religious knowledge, which has been justified upon the basis of the nature of faith and knowledge, must not be surrendered, but on the contrary must be carried through with ever-increasing clearness. Otherwise in the end faith itself would be shaken, instead of strengthened, which as a matter of fact is often the outcome of misjudged apologetic efforts.

The old controverted point as to the relation of *Dogmatics* and *Ethics*, the Christian faith and the Christian life, certainly presents greater difficulty for the beginnings of the latter than of the former. Perhaps for that very reason, it will be less difficult to secure the recognition of some principles, which must be kept

in view here at the commencement of the Dogmatic system. If it be said that in both sciences the whole subject-matter of Christian doctrine may be dealt with, but under opposite points of view, namely that of rest or dependence in Dogmatics and that of motion or personal activity, freedom, in Ethics, this position may be harmless, nay fruitful, when handled by a master—think of Rothe. It can, however, still more easily become a cloak for obscurity, through the relation of dependence and freedom, in the sense of our religion, not being clearly defined either in Dogmatics or in Ethics. It goes into the matter more deeply to note that, on the one hand (see Apologetics), Christian faith cannot originate without personal surrender, moral willing, as we may again remind ourselves by reference to the often quoted words of John VII. 17; and that on the other hand the Christian faith in God cannot continue without moral willing, without self-realization of the most personal kind, but on the contrary is the basis of and impulse to the good (see Ethics) —both circumstances following from the fact that our religion claims to be the absolutely ethical one. Certainly we have here carefully to distinguish between moral willing in general and Christian moral willing: there is Christian faith only where there is some sort of moral will (however it may differ in nature and degree in different cases); and there is Christian moral will only where there is Christian faith. But in any case it follows from this simple consideration that, as regards the main point, the correct procedure is to conceive of the Christian faith and the Christian life as an inseparable whole, and to adhere to the separation, which indeed was effected at a comparatively late date (Calixtus, 1634), essentially only on external grounds. Schleiermacher's two questions are inseparable: What must be, and what must come to be, because there is Christian self-consciousness?

Or how is the affirmation "God loves me," possible? and what is meant by "I love God" on the basis of it? (J. Chr. Hofmann). Or to speak with Seeberg—God is for us, therefore everything ministers to us; we are God's, therefore we are the servants of all. Or with Gottschick—on what actions of God do I know my salvation to be based? What task is appointed for my personal activity, because I am certain of salvation? Only when the two are taken together, is it fully explained what Christianity is. Ethics without continual reference to Dogmatics is not distinctively Christian ethics, and Dogmatics unless it has ethics continually in view is wanting in clearness, and poor in reference to significant content. Therefore if we express the Christian salvation by the term "Kingdom of God," Dogmatics shows how this blessing becomes an assured personal possession, through trust in the revelation of God in Christ; Ethics, how such trust brings us the impulse and the power to become fellow-workers in the realization of it. For just as certainly as it is a gift, so certainly does this gift become a task by reason of its nature. But for this very reason, it is only the two together which constitute the whole of Christianity. When this is admitted without qualification, it is simply a question of convenience, whether Dogmatics and Ethics are to be taken together as constituting one system of Christian Doctrine, as K. I. Nitzsch and H. H. Wendt strongly insist. Hitherto, apart from external reasons, connected especially with academical instruction, it is chiefly the abundance of the "Ethical" material that has prevented this requirement from being fulfilled; but its intrinsic justice should not be disputed in principle, especially if an exhaustive treatment of Apologetics is put in the forefront of the whole system.

The *Division* of Dogmatics is of importance for the separate doctrines, where frequently the very arrange-

ment shows whether the principles already laid down with reference to the nature of religious knowledge, and its method, are attended to. But in regard to the question of the main division of the subject, there is almost but one point of material significance. Namely there must be a conscious abandonment of the ruling thought of the most influential work in the history of Dogmatics. Schleiermacher says: "We shall exhaust the subject, if we consider the facts of the religious self-consciousness, in the first place, as they are already pre-supposed by the antithesis expressed in the concept of redemption (sin and grace), and in the second place, as they are determined by this antithesis." This distinction doubtless widely influenced the presentation of Dogmatics before Schleiermacher—think for example of the general doctrine of God, and the distinctively Christian doctrine of the Trinity. But in fact it is Schleiermacher himself who has shown, and that with special clearness, how, in the different religions, matters which are seemingly most closely akin are differently defined according to their fundamental idea, how no single expression like the unity of God, providence, faith, redemption, blessedness, has the same significance in two different religions. Why then is the Dogmatic Theologian to rush into a temptation to which he must necessarily succumb? Under the name of general religious experiences (or doctrinal positions) presupposed in Christianity, he must either make entirely colourless indefinite statements, or on the other hand, as will always be the case in some respects at the same time, statements which, in spite of their Christian indefiniteness, are already too definite in another direction, being less than Christian, and so involuntarily rendering complete Christian definiteness difficult, nay impossible (take here for example Schleiermacher's "general" statements regarding God in relation to the

natural order). But then should we not go still farther, and not begin with the Doctrine of God and the world at all, but with the Doctrine of Sin and Grace, with the very core of all experience of Christian faith? Has not the censure been pronounced with good reason, that most frequently the idea of faith is discussed only at a very late stage? That very view is carefully considered in the exposition by Schleiermacher which has been alluded to; and the well known arrangement of the first brief outlines by Melanchthon and by Calvin appears to make its importance complete. Among those of recent date, Lobstein has accordingly proposed a strictly Christocentric structure for Dogmatics. But as the attempt is made to carry out this proposal, it is scarcely possible to get over the objection, that far too much of the Doctrine of God and man must be presupposed. Hence the aim, so far as it is a legitimate one, is without doubt more adequately realized, if, as was done in the foregoing, saving faith is set forth, even in Apologetics, in its inseparable connexion with Christ. And in the sphere of practice, the desired end is frequently reached by gaining an acquaintance with Christian Ethics in the first instance, and then turning from this to Dogmatics.

Next, as to details, there is less danger in merely ranging the chief doctrines alongside of each other (J. Kaftan), than in making too much of an artificial connexion of them. But if some sort of articulation is unavoidable after all in a systematic science, it is advisable in the first instance, for the sake of historical continuity (Origen, Calvin), to follow the three Divisions of the ancient Creed. The more these three parts are integrally related to each other, the love of God being shown to be completely that revealed in Christ, Christ completely the revelation of this love, and the Holy Spirit the Spirit of this same God and this same Jesus Christ, as He works

in the Church and in the individual, the more will the division into three parts approve itself as natural, while at the same time room will be left for the utmost variety in the understanding of details. Our faith is always occupied with one single inexhaustible subject—God's love to us: this means, however, God who reveals Himself in Christ as love to us, Christ in whom God reveals Himself as love to us, the Holy Spirit in whom this revelation of the love of God to us through Christ is actualized in us. Consequently in all the parts rightly understood the same content is expressed, but under different points of view; for example even the eschatology, with which the third part concludes, is necessarily prefigured in the first. Under what unifying point of view these three parts are next brought into relation, depends upon what idea has the preference in the defining of the nature of our religion—sonship to God, justification, or the Kingdom of God (cf. p. 84 f.). But this matter cannot be followed out here, whereas it presents itself naturally at a later stage. Only there is found another distinction, which is not without material significance, in the fact that, in Dogmatics, many emphasize the point of view of the "historical process of redemption"—and take credit to themselves for so doing—speaking perhaps (with Frank) of its principle, accomplishment, and goal; and in dealing with its accomplishment, of generation, degeneration, and regeneration. Manifestly this is not in the interest of Dogmatics as the scientific presentation of the Christian faith. This faith, though it rests entirely upon historical revelation, is yet not itself a history; otherwise, as regards content, its interests are apt to be encroached upon, if it is made to assume the form of the "Divine Human Drama," even if we manage to steer clear of the dangers attending the popularization of this method, as that for example almost as much is heard of Adam as of Christ.

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AS A COHERENT SYSTEM

FAITH IN GOD THE FATHER

THE supreme principle *as regards method* which we arrived at in our Apologetics, must regulate every detailed exposition of Dogmatics, viz.—The revelation of God in Christ is the ground and norm of all religious knowledge. This was emphasized by Melanchthon in his preface to the first system of Evangelical Dogmatics. Not only is its truth clear, but it is specially necessary that we should be fully alive to the principle, at the commencement of our doctrine of God. Luther is never weary of enforcing Matthew XI. 27 ff., John XIV. 6, and XVII. 3. Because the whole Dogmatic system is in the last resort a doctrine of God, every error here inevitably avenges itself in every division. We saw that in the old Protestant Dogmatics other elements were imposed upon the foundation of faith in God, without accurate examination of their adequacy, namely the theistic proofs, and that these threatened the security of the foundation which at first they were believed to strengthen. We also required to point to the fact that, down to the present, indeed especially in it, old dangers threaten to arise under new names; e.g. when the idea of a religious a priori is not defined with precision. As revelation is the ground, so it is also the norm, of Christian knowledge of God, as regards its content and compass, as well as its nature. As regards its content: God is what He reveals Himself to faith as being. Hence those elements of the idea of God which win trust must never be discarded, a thing that happens so often in the name

of alleged science, e.g. in the doctrine of the hearing of prayer. As revelation is the norm for the content of the Doctrine of God, it is so also in regard to its compass. The Doctrine of God has to set forth nothing else except what God is, according to His Revelation of Himself. Much that seems of importance beyond these limits must stand aside; perhaps it contains a problem which we must elucidate, but it does not belong to the sphere of religious faith. Likewise the nature of the knowledge of God is defined by the circumstance that it has its source in revelation; it depends upon personal conditions. This peculiarity of being determined by Revelation applies even to the mode of speech we employ; because content, compass and nature are dominated by Revelation, because everything that has a right to a place in Dogmatics serves "our salvation and the glory of God," and "there is no knowledge of God, where there is no piety" (Calvin), our very language is determined by the grateful reverence with which we are filled by the knowledge of the Reality of supreme value. There is no room in a real system of Dogmatics for the hurried play of desultory thought, for mere superficial smartness which pleases for the moment, for cheap condemnation of once valuable, even if imperfect, forms given to the eternal content; but there is just as much profanity in an artificial sanctimoniousness which seeks to atone for intellectual insipidity. In Augustine's Confessions, the profoundest thoughts about God appear in the form of a devout colloquy with the Deity. However true it is that this mode of treating the subject cannot be repeated, the inmost motive of it should prove to be operative in any Doctrine of God.

There is general agreement regarding the subjects to be dealt with in the Christian doctrine of God; the differences concern the method of treatment, and have

their roots in the fact of which we spoke, that revelation is not always taken seriously as the starting-point. What we are saying does not apply in essential particulars to the question of the *division* of our subject; a division satisfactory in all points of view has not yet been discovered. Manifestly our subject is God in His relation to the world. For in religion this alone concerns us: it was just for this reason that for us the ground and norm of religious knowledge was the revelation of God, His showing Himself active in the world. This holds good even of the doctrine of the Trinity. The objection that in this case we have to do "merely" with God's relation to the world, without knowing His real being, can be urged, only by one who does not take seriously this recognition of Revelation in the Christian sense: this revelation of His is a manifestation of His real self. It is right and proper, therefore, that Dogmatics speaks of God and the world, placing the emphasis at one time upon God, and at another upon the world, for the very reason that the revelation of God is a revelation of His being directed to the world and in the world. But difficulties are occasioned, and at all events the interests of lucidity are endangered, when in the Christian doctrine of God, the world comes into consideration as in actuality sinful; while at the same time it cannot be exhibited as being simply sinful, because that would be apparently to prejudge the question of the origin of this contradiction to the love of God. Then again there is another difficulty. The usual distinction between the natural and the moral worlds doubtless has its basis in the facts of the case, but at the same time it involves the danger to which we had to refer above, when dealing with the question of the division of the Dogmatic system as a whole; the intrusion namely of general statements regarding the relation of God to the world, which, later on, when we

deal with the definitely Christian positions, make themselves felt as infra-Christian. Thus in discussing the relation of God to the natural world, the continuity of natural law is often spoken of in such terms, as will make it difficult to give expression to the definitely Christian view of the hearing of prayer; an example which was mentioned above in another connexion, because it is of special importance in all relations. Finally, we must admit an impression which certainly arises more often than expression is given to it. When the doctrine of Providence takes its place alongside of the doctrines of the creation and preservation of the world, as coordinate with these, particularly when they precede the doctrine of sin, the doctrine of Providence does not have the significance which belongs to it in religion itself; it appears simply as one doctrine, occupying the same plane of value with those others of which we speak. All these considerations may perhaps come to their own, if in what follows we deal first with God in His relation to the world; then with the world in its relation to God; and then with the Divine Attributes; and finally with Providence. This last is the comprehensive idea, in which all that is previously treated has its immediate reality for faith. Here it is shown what Christians mean by statements like these: God is Love; He loves the world; such and such are the modes of action of the Divine love in relation to the world. Here it is determined with equal precision what the world means for Christians, because it is the world of the God of whom we speak, who is love and brings men into the eternal fellowship of His love. For if we cannot experience this much in this world of doubt and care, if it is not as a whole and in each one of its separate happenings the world determined by the love of God, it cannot be God's world, and there is no God

of love; whatever high-sounding words we may make use of thereanent in the doctrine of God, and also in the so-called doctrine of the Attributes. Our fourth division therefore explains our second, defining its meaning more precisely, as in the first instance the third does the first; but in the fourth, we have the direct explanation of what all the others mean, not for speculation divorced from the actual world, but for Christian faith as it fights its battles and gains its victories in the actual world. Consequently even the doctrine of sin, the foundation of which naturally belongs to the second division, finds its completion in the doctrine of Providence (as embraced and vanquished by it). If one reflects on the position of matters, as here stated, one will not allow much weight to the objection which readily occurs, that an exposition which follows this arrangement is ruled by circumstances, and is not rigidly scientific as it ought to be. For after all, the arrangement in every case must depend on the subject which has to be set forth.

GOD (AND THE WORLD)

When dealing with the nature of religion, we showed what general characteristics pertain to the idea of God at all stages and in every type of religion, and how, nevertheless, its distinctive content differs with every religion. We also saw that this difference in content corresponds to the difference of view regarding the religious blessing, which the deity concerned bestows upon his worshippers. But the distinctive conception of the nature of God, which corresponds to the nature of the blessing He confers, always differs according to His special manifestation of Himself as active, i.e. according to what is believed regarding His self-revelation. Now we Christians believe in the God who reveals Himself in Jesus, and, working in Him, brings us into

fellowship with Himself. We know, therefore, who our God is, what constitutes His nature, from what He bestows upon us in Jesus, from the religious blessing which Jesus brings us; abstractly, from the purpose which He realizes. His purpose is that of the God who works in Him. For all definite activity must present itself to our minds as designed to serve some definite purpose. But the activity of Jesus is summed up in the realization of the Kingdom of God, that fellowship of God with us, and of us with God and with each other, in love, of which we have already spoken, and which forms the subject of the whole both of Dogmatics and of Ethics (cf. e.g. Eph. I. 4). God, therefore, is love (1 John IV. 8), and to expound this truth in detail, is, rightly understood, the whole task of the Christian doctrine of God.

But this is the case, only if the matter is rightly understood; namely, if the general presuppositions of this distinctively Christian idea of God are not neglected, as we had to set them forth when dealing with the concept of religion (pp. 43 ff.). God, as we then saw, is always thought of as a power exalted above the world of the religious persons concerned, and governing it, as the goal of the world and a power superior to it. This is so, however varied, indeed self-contradictory, may be the precise content of this idea in all its constitutional elements (World, exalted, governing), and however material even, to begin with and for the most part, may be the opinions held regarding the supramundane goal and power, of which we speak. Further, in all religions this power is thought of as being in some way personal, otherwise there would be no religion, no interest on the part of God in man, no turning to God on man's part.

These general fundamental characteristics of the idea

of God are, of course, only presuppositions for the Christian idea of God. They do not express the peculiar content of it; it is rather through that content that they acquire their definitely Christian sense. We do not retract in any measure what we said in the foregoing,—namely, that the statement, "God is love," is the whole Christian doctrine of God. As soon as we think of ourselves as confined to the alternative: God must be thought of either as Absolute Personality or as Love—the question is immediately decided in favour of Love. This is the relation also in which the Biblical statements, "God is Spirit," "God is Love," have always been placed, as soon as the question has been clearly put. We believe in the (supramundane, unconditioned) personal love, not in the loving (supramundane, unconditioned) personality. The opposite cannot be established by an objection which is at first sight important, namely that it is the nature of love to communicate itself in showing kindness and expressing satisfaction: if then the nature of God is love, He communicates Himself as love, and in order to escape this circle, we must say that out of love He imparts the life of His absolute personality (J. Kaftan). Assuredly this statement is quite correct and important. God does really impart His love. It is obvious that this love of His is in all respects incomparably the highest kind, infinitely excelling all human love; and this truth may be expressed by the statements that God is the Absolute, and the Absolute Personality moreover. But we state the most momentous fact in saying that God loves, not that out of love He gives all. The same is true even in the higher relations of man with man. We reach the same result when we explain the statement that the divine love imparts itself, by means of the other: it seeks communion in order to realize the common supreme end. This too, it might at first be ob-

jected, is a circle : the common end is the Kingdom of God, while the Kingdom of God again is the fellowship of love. Only this also is but an apparent circle. For in reality what God wills, what is His supreme end, is that we may experience His love, and upon the basis of this experience, may ourselves love God and our neighbour ; it is manifest again that we are to do this in the full richness of all the powers bestowed upon us ; but this full richness ranks under the end of which we speak, as a means for the realization of it.

So much for the explanation of our statement, that the general conceptions of God's supramundane character and His Personality are only presuppositions of the Christian conception of the Deity—"God is love". But now we have the other side of the truth. They are necessary presuppositions. We do not believe in the God who is love, if we do not believe that this love is supramundane, "absolute," love, the purpose and ground of the world, and love too in the form of personality. On that matter, the pronouncements of the New Testament leave no doubt. Jesus prays to the Father as Lord of heaven and earth. Paul's thought is lost in the unfathomable depths in God, of whom and through whom and to whom are all things. Calvin's statements on the grace of God never allow one to forget that, in His eternal Majesty, He is the Lord of all lords. Luther's "de servo arbitrio" sets off his jubilant feeling in view of sonship to God. The modern consciousness, as being struck dumb before the absolute mystery, often fancies itself superior to faith, with its confidence based on Revelation. As compared with the familiarity with God which is deficient in reverence, it would be right. In elucidating the Christian pronouncement, "God is love," we shall therefore have to attend expressly to this matter.

In the first instance, it is clear how these presupposi-

tions give occasion for sceptical questions which are the most difficult of all, precisely in Christianity. We refer particularly to the conception of the Absolute and that of Personality, each by itself, but chiefly the two in combination. As long as we are not at all strict in our view of God's exaltation above the world and His governing of it, especially if we conceive them somehow after the analogy of the relative exaltation of the human spirit above nature, and the relative dominion over nature exercised by the human spirit, as these are known to us by experience, the idea causes us little difficulty. But in this indefinite form, it is insufficient for the Christian idea of God; indeed it is altogether insufficient as soon as the idea of the One God is reached. For it denotes that God is not exalted above and master of some sort of world, as it appears when viewed from some limited standpoint. On the contrary He is exalted above the whole world, without any qualification: He is the unconditioned goal and ground of the world. This is just the original religious sense of the term, the Absolute. This conception of the unconditioned, which has at the same time been elaborated by philosophy, from a regard for its own interests, has since occupied the most manifold relations to the Christian view of God. Often it was looked upon as the best, the most excellent expression of that view: the belief was that its essential content could be derived from, and most securely based upon, the idea of the Absolute. And then it was readily regarded as a supreme standard for determining what is tenable in the idea of the love of God. After all that we have said, this is certainly out of the question. But at the same time the love of God must be reconciled with the idea of the Absolute, and also with that of the *personality* of God. This idea also, when removed from the sphere of the indefinite, as it must be in its application to the Christian

conception of God, involves a whole series of problems. To be sure, we quite understand that the higher the standing of a personality, the more unity there is about his purposes, so that the unity of the divine purpose is matter for adoration on our part. But in our understanding of what we call personal life, we cannot get away from the psychic processes in ourselves: are we to find an analogy to these in God, and how are we to do it? Now it is just at this point that the former idea of which we spoke, that of the absoluteness of God, His unconditioned exaltation above and mastery over the world, becomes the powerful ally of the doubts which the very idea of personality in itself excites: "Is not Absolute Personality the perfect self-contradiction?" (Strauss). Only a few have the courage to assert on the other hand, with Frank, that the concept of the Absolute involves that of personality. Nor is it by any means only the scientific mode of thought that inclines to the doubt of which we speak. There is scarcely another point at which doubt comes into so close touch with the general feeling; it is found here, just as it also is in regard to the belief in Providence, with the first steps which reflection takes, often very awkward ones. This is natural enough, seeing that the intellectual difficulty concerns personal piety so directly, and the difficulties are so plain and obvious. But for this reason, this also is a point at which the nature of religious knowledge must be made specially clear. Further, because often all that may be said concerning the Christian idea of God as love, is prejudiced by the unspoken impression that the idea of absolute personality is irretrievably lost, though it constitutes the presupposition of the idea of love, we make an exception here, placing the apologetic task before the dogmatic, and dealing first with

Absolute Personality

The Absolute Personality

We shall first consider the objections to Absolute Personality. In case they cannot be altogether refuted, the question arises whether the idea which causes offence may not be surrendered, without injury being done to Christian piety. Should this also prove impossible, we have to show in what sense and upon what ground it may still be maintained.

In dealing with the objections, we distinguish between those that can be refuted, and the one that cannot. Taken collectively, they resolve themselves into a disquisition on the statement: All determination is negation (*Omnis determinatio est negatio*); to predicate personality is to limit, but God is the Absolute, the negation of every limitation. This is certainly a statement that can be taken in many different ways. For this very reason, considerations based upon it are of very varied worth; but the exposition of them sets the main point in a clear light. In the first place, if we should understand the statement in the strictest way, it would by no means exclude only the affirmation that God is personal, but every affirmation in relation to Him which, ostensibly in view of the statement we speak of, it is thought may be substituted for personality; such as that God is pure spirit (Biedermann), and the like. It would be necessary to accept without any reservation the Neo-Platonic idea that God is exalted above every definite quality, and to refuse absolutely to make any affirmation regarding Him. If we say that God is pure being, this differs from saying that He is pure nothingness, only because, without knowing it, we again supply tacitly, at least some positive affirmations regarding Him. In its most general use, therefore, as given above, the principle which is supposed to render belief in the

personality of God impossible, is harmless. The *second* application of the principle runs as follows: Personality is the unity which comprehends itself in itself, and excludes all else from itself; and is therefore the opposite of the Absolute as the all-inclusive, which excludes nothing but just that comprehension of itself in itself of which we speak. Only this is not by any means a correct description of the concept of spiritual, to say nothing of moral, personality. It is only the third application of the principle which demands serious consideration, namely: "The Ego is unthinkable without the Non-ego". There are three ways in which this statement may be understood. It may be said quite generally that the non-ego is the ground of the ego, so that God needs the contrast with the world as a condition of His personality, and so cannot be the Absolute. But this overlooks the fact that our ego, our self-conscious personality, does not at all find its full explanation in the contrast with the non-ego; but that on the contrary a feeling of separate existence must be already presupposed, if the contrast with the non-ego is to issue in self-consciousness. We must, therefore, at least put the matter more precisely thus: The growth of the finite personality depends upon the existence of an external world, i.e. upon the influence exerted by the non-ego; and consequently for us the idea of Absolute Personality is a contradiction. Only the retort lies open: To be sure, the concept of Absolute Personality involves a world of ideas, feelings, and volitional activities, but this world is not a godless one; in God Himself there may be found eternally the ground of the activity of which we speak. For it is irrational to transfer the conditions necessary for the development of finite personality to the Infinite, especially as even the finite, in the course of its development, becomes relatively independent of the

external world, and draws from its own inner world. If again our opponents would still further ask, what it is in God that corresponds to the first impulse which finite personality receives from without, they forget that even any contrasted idea of the Absolute, and indeed Materialism itself, have just simply to assume a first activity, without in any way being able to comprehend it.

But faith, conscientiously testing the objections of its opponents, must not, for the sake of its own certainty, *content itself with* such refutation. It finds another and deeper meaning in the proposition of which we speak, and asks : How is personal life, which we cannot imagine without change of relations in our self-consciousness and in our self-determination, i.e. without inner movement of the vital forces, compatible with the unchangeableness of the inner life of the Godhead, as that appears to be given us in the idea of absoluteness ? Now there are certainly good grounds for saying, that even we experience the unity and continuity of the inner personal life ; indeed, that this constitutes the supreme content of life for us, especially in the carrying through to the end of a great purpose, by instrumentality of a long series of means. When, however, we apply this to God, His unchangeableness in a moral point of view is beyond all question fully safeguarded ; and this is certainly the main point, provided that we regard the confession of Him as love, as the supreme thing for us. But we must express ourselves unambiguously : we have not attained to a real insight into the inner life of the Godhead as personal—the formal presupposition, so to say, of the content of the statement that God is love, which is what is here occupying us. We are confronted by a clear alternative and it must be unreservedly recognized as such ; e.g. even as against the speculation of a Lotze, whose clear-sighted refutation of the usual objections we have

adopted in the foregoing. Either we emphasize that God in the unity of His personality comprehends in like fashion the whole fullness of the inner relations of which we spoke; that He is, to speak in terms of space and time, at all times equally near to them all. In that case we do away with His inner activity, productivity, or whatever we choose to call it: His knowledge is sight in eternal repose, His willing is eternal bringing to pass, His life is unaffected by desire or the absence of it. Or, on the other hand, we emphasize the activity characteristic of the inner life of the Godhead; in which case we do away with His unchangeableness, by which we sought to distinguish His life as absolute, from ours as finite. This alternative forces itself upon us all the more, as in Christianity we are compelled to attribute to man as a moral being some sort of independent reality; an idea which will occupy us finally in the doctrine of the eternity of God. Here we may simply add a reference to philosophical contributions to this problem, as by Lotze or Simmel. They are the more worthy of gratitude, when their skilfully established position that human personality deserves to be called only a very imperfect form of personality, that God is Personality in its entire truth, is accompanied by the recognition of the fundamental truth of religion, that in the nature of piety there is involved the rejection of all pure Pantheism, because there is involved the assertion of a real personal relation between the personal God and us. But even they do not get over the difficulty we have mentioned.

In view of these circumstances, it is natural that ever and anon the attempt should be made to ELIMINATE THE IDEA of the personality of God, as one that Christian faith can dispense with. We have already travelled far, it may be said, from the original anthropomorphic—all too

anthropomorphic—presentations of God, to the sublimated conception of spiritual personality, as found in the religious consciousness of the present day; why should we not, in consistency, take the last step and surrender this conception too? This is advice that faith will certainly be predisposed to regard with suspicion, because it knows how vitally interested all religion has always been to conceive of God in the form of personal life (see pp. 45 f.). The more carefully the assertion that the idea can be dispensed with is looked into, the clearer and stronger will this immediate feeling become. This holds good especially of the most brilliant defence of the position of Schleiermacher, that Christian piety is compatible even with the Pantheistic idea of God, that of Biedermann. He says first of all that the whole conflict is a matter of words. For every higher idea of God seeks to safeguard alike the two essential moments, absoluteness and spirituality. Those now who speak of personality merely wish to emphasize that they are in earnest in regard to the spirituality; those who reject it, that they are in earnest in regard to the absoluteness. But at the same time it is necessary to forgo the use of the expression "personality": for the reason that personality is the specific form of existence for the finite spirit, it must be surrendered by every one who does not wish to continue at the stage of the "sense-form," of which it constitutes the characteristic shibboleth. Therefore, the one of the essential characteristics of which we speak, the absoluteness, is taken so seriously by Biedermann, that the other, the spirituality, must no longer be expressed in the form of which it had just been said, that its intention is to show that we are in earnest about the spirituality. Now this is certainly not a mere dispute about words. For Biedermann asserts, in distinction from Hegel, that the "senseform" remains the common

form of our faith—that it belongs essentially to religion. But how then can the personality of God, which is the shibboleth of a Theism conforming to "sense-forms," be surrendered? That this is impossible without injury to faith, is shown by Biedermann's doctrine of prayer, which leaves no room for real communion between God and man. Indeed, such communion is inconceivable apart from the idea of the personality of God. But even the most recent laudations of the "Unconscious" cannot fascinate the Christian Church. She does not require to be told that communion with God is higher than all reason; whether in the sense that reason does not humbly guard one's private experience as a mystery, or in the sense that it presumes to analyze the inner life of God. But she cannot renounce the relationship expressed with reverence and trust by "Thou" and "I," without giving up her all. This anthropomorphism belongs to the essence of our religion.

Little more need be said to indicate the ATTITUDE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH to this problem: we have already made the transition to that matter in the course of our discussion. Christian faith asserts the personality of God, not, however, simply because otherwise it would be signing its own death-warrant, i.e. simply on account of the value of the idea. On the contrary, it defines the qualifications with which it asserts the personality of God, and vindicates its standpoint, thus carefully defined, upon good grounds both of knowledge and of faith.

The *qualification* is as follows. Because in the revelation of God faith recognizes the nature of God, namely as love, while on the other hand, love without the form of personal life is for us something altogether unintelligible, it asserts the personality of God; and is assured that *what it* means by this, the necessary presupposition of

the communion between God and man in love, of which we speak, is neither invalidated by any knowledge of God supposed to be purer, nor is it regarded as a delusion on the part of man in the judgment of God, knowing Himself as He does. In this sense Christian faith claims an adequate knowledge of God, not only in reference to the position that God is love, but also in regard to the position that God is personal spirit, so far as the latter is inseparable from the former. On the other hand, faith itself regards as inadequate its knowledge of God with reference to the *mode* of this personal inner life of the Godhead, the psychological conditions, so to speak, of its course. Thus it does not assert, for example, that the hearing of a petitionary prayer involves the same moments in the divine feeling, thought and volition, as it does in the case of a finite personal spirit. But it certainly does assert that such hearing is a reality even for the divine life. Nothing is farther from it than the thought of God as One who is only an infinitely great man; as is presupposed in a specially crude fashion in the "definition" given by Haeckel, one which does not deserve to be made more widely known. And here again we need to remind ourselves of the symbolical character of religious language (pp. 47 f., 245 f.), especially of the fact that while its terms, which originated under other circumstances as regards education, certainly serve to express religious experiences, and summon men to enter on such experience, they have also a kind of independent existence, and by means of collateral ideas which adhere to them, readily become a hindrance to religious experience; unless they are constantly rejuvenated, in the consciousness of another generation, by what springs from this living source, the antiquated element in an idea being cast off, and what has eternal life being supplied to it (Steinmann). An increasing

apprehension of the nature of religious language, as thus described, is far more full of promise than an over-hasty coining of ambiguous terms, such as the super-personality or super-consciousness of God. The truth which they mean to express is recognized in the foregoing; for the rest, they readily contribute to build up a phraseology which is fraught with danger.

The *proof* that this is the attitude of genuine faith, upon grounds both of faith and of knowledge, is found in the conclusions of our Apologetic (pp. 141 ff., 252 ff.). As regards knowledge, it is found in a critical inquiry into the inherent limitations of assent-compelling knowledge. Those who make the inconceivableness of the divine self-consciousness, the inadequacy of our knowledge with reference to the *mode* of which we spoke, a reason for denying the love of God, when it meets them in God's revelation of Himself, declare assent-compelling knowledge the highest good, not because of necessary grounds of theoretical knowledge, but because of a decision of the will; for they assert that nothing can be real save what can be proved by such means. In this connexion, as against all such objections, supposed to be based upon necessary grounds of theoretical knowledge, faith is well served especially by the proof, which its opponents themselves are wont to furnish against their will with such completeness, that other ideas regarding the absolute are in themselves by no means more clear than the Christian idea of God, which they attack; for example the famous definition of the absolute as "Pure being in itself and by itself, and being in itself the ground of all being outside of itself". When once such considerations have protected faith against the charge of speaking of reasons peculiar to itself, because it cannot answer the counter-arguments of knowledge, it can prove without reserve from its own nature, that another state of matters

would be altogether inconsistent with its nature, and fatal to its life. Complete knowledge of God in reference to the mode of the inner life of the Godhead, is not at all compatible with the idea of the love of God, as it is actually derived from revelation ; an idea which does not abolish the distinction between creature and Creator, and so makes Him the object of adoring reverent trust. The ethical character of Christian Faith is at stake (p. 146 ff.). Faith by its very nature is precluded from raising the question how God can be God (Lotze). Thus "not to know the things that man cannot know and is not meant to know," is for it "wise ignorance ; to imagine that one knows them is a sort of madness" (Calvin).

While this last consideration will soon engage our attention again, we may be justified by a regard for a wide-spread feeling, in further explaining briefly the other idea we spoke of, and finding that the substitute offered by the opponents of the conception of Personality, as applicable to God, when it too is looked at dispassionately in the light of thought, has little in it to lead us astray. Many are bold enough to assure us that religion is possible, only if "man's spiritual self is identified with the Godhead," and if the "deification or the annihilation of the self," which is otherwise inevitable, is by this means obviated (A. Drews). That will be an incredible announcement for all who clearly realize what actual religion is, and do not merely protest that such religion is the object of their reflection, whereas in truth they construct something which they call religion, but in which religious men do not recognize anything of the kind. However, apart altogether from that, we ask whether the ideas of the Absolute, which are lauded as a substitute, are in themselves clear and free from inconsistency. Little hope of that is awakened by what is said with the aim of explaining that identity of the

spiritual self and the Godhead which was just referred to. To begin with, there is the shiftiness of the explanation, the change from the statement that the self and God are identical, to the other statements, that the self is one of the "joint functions of God," and that it has "a root in God". Still less reassuring is the assertion that "self-consciousness and self" are to be distinguished, and that "spirit in its true form is unconscious"; especially as such assurances are always accompanied by attacks on the mental obtuseness which does not understand a solution of this superior type. But of course we have pretty often had occasion to observe that sort of thing before in the history of philosophy, when the ability to furnish proof had failed. However, it is quite time that real science should no longer allow itself to be blinded by the seeming merits of Pantheism. For the latter, as is said with different shades of thought, God is translucent like nature: He is not some inconceivable agency that disturbs nature; its laws exhibit the unchangeableness of God in a way which we can understand; the world does not limit God and make Him finite, all semblance of human capriciousness being excluded. As if the concept of the world were an object of experience which is clear in itself; as if the idea of laws of nature exhausted the essence of reality; as if God, brought in this sense into the life of the world, made the conflicting realities of the world appear more intelligible, and the enigma of our personality, especially of the moral personality, more endurable (Kovalevski). It cannot surprise us if that which often shows so little clearness in the lofty realms of science, passes into mere resonant oratory on the low tracts where ephemeral pamphleteering obtains; take e.g.—From the "Divine Humanity in the Universe of God," from the "primal abyss of the consummation of things," through the "divinely settled,

divinely ramified, divinely blooming and divinely matured Church of Humanity" (Pamphlets of the Young Germans; and such like). But even conceptions of modern thought which rise to a higher level,—e.g. the recognition of "a spiritual ground of the world, of a supreme essence within nature, principally in the human mind," "to which we accord a devotion, in the worship of the ideal, which the Gospel calls faith" (B. Wille)—are unable, from their vagueness, to compete seriously with the Christian conception of Absolute Personality. In view of such tentative efforts, we can well understand that the movement for a Christian Metaphysic, which we previously discussed, finds no little sympathy at present. It is in truth superior to those pronouncements which are often given forth with such pompous airs, as antitheses to Christian faith in God; and it is right in maintaining that "the inference pointing to a purposive Will" set over the world, though "not necessary, is yet more intelligible" than Pantheism. Only, while making this acknowledgment, we cannot retract our objections, made on the ground of principle, to the mode of establishing a new Christian speculation of the kind.

This discussion on Absolute Personality should now enable us, with a good conscience and with no more trouble, to set forth the proper content of the Christian conception of God.

God as Holy Love

The dogmatic exposition of this doctrine of religion is rendered difficult by the very circumstance which constitutes its merit, namely that it is as inexhaustible as it is simple. Were it otherwise, it could not be all in all for all men of all ages. This inexhaustible simplicity of which we speak in the concept of God, makes Christian Dogmatics a unity; in all its parts

it is simply the unfolding of the concept before us. But at the same time it makes it difficult in any single section like the one before us, to say what is most essential, without unnecessary repetition in other places. What is most essential is to explain the Christian name for God, namely *Father*, or the statement which has the same meaning, that *God is love.*

As certainly as Jesus does not reveal a different God from the one revealed in the history of His people, and thus largely presupposes God as known, He is yet conscious of alone knowing this God perfectly, and on the basis of this knowledge of revealing Him perfectly. In accordance with this, the name Father, though it also has its roots in the Old Testament, receives a new content (Matt. xi. 27 ff.), exactly corresponding to the new meaning given to the other Old Testament expression, Kingdom of God, the rule of the God of whom we speak. Every element is eliminated which is merely national in favour of what is universally human, together with everything that is one-sidedly social in favour of what is individual, everything that is legal in favour of what makes for personal freedom, everything in these relations that looks merely to this earth, and—what is the basis of all—everything that is not yet fully spiritual or ethical. Again full justice is done to what the name of Father necessarily presupposes regarding that exaltation above, and sovereignty over, the world, of which we spoke as involved in the idea of the Absolute (p. 321 ff.), by inference from the fact that Jesus designates the Father as the Heavenly Father.

Jesus wishes His whole work in word, deed and suffering to be understood as the Father's work in Him—as the revelation of the Father (see pp. 199 ff. in our Apologetics, and the doctrine of Christ in our Dogmatics). But His work is love—the love which delivers

sinners and receives them into the Kingdom of God (Luke xv. 1 ff., John xiii. 1 ff.). And He directs us to regard His whole existence which makes such work possible, as the Father's will and the supreme proof of His love (Luke xix. 10, John iii. 16). Hence His church shows that it has entered with full discernment into His intention, by summing up the knowledge of God bestowed upon it in Jesus in the statement, "God is love" (1 John iv. 8). Accordingly the task arises of defining the idea of love, as an essential characteristic of God, in its most important features, and then of showing how all that here comes under consideration finds expression in a direct religious sense in the name of God as the Heavenly Father.

The fear of having only worthless analogies drawn from human life to offer, in applying the features in question of the concept of *love* to God, need no longer disturb us. Indeed it is just in relation to the highest objects that we have realized the necessarily symbolical character of all our means of expression; and this being the case, it is obvious that there are no higher symbols than those derived from our spiritual life at its highest. It also follows then that it is not in its essential features that the limit of the applicability of the idea of love to God is to be found, but in the formal psychological presuppositions, which we dealt with under the heading of the personality of God. As regards those characteristics, on the other hand, which are normative for the content of the concept of love, not only may Christian Dogmatics "apply" them to God, but they find indeed their ultimate ground in the revelation of God. Men know what love really is, since they know the reality of God. "Herein is love, that God has loved us" (1 John iv. 10). Everything that elsewhere deserves the name is for the Christian judgment a feeling after, yearning for, pre-

monition or effect of, the love of God as it gradually reveals itself; and now, after the sun has risen, we have its clear warm radiance, and its divine victory over all that is not love.

Now love is the desire for fellowship both in giving and receiving, arising out of a wish for the well-being of, and out of pleasure in, the other, for the realization of common ends (see fuller statement in "Ethics," p. 131 f.). Then it is clear, first of all with reference to the former part of this definition, how this aspect of God's nature, as manifested in Jesus, is brought to light in Holy Scripture in many forms, and attested to us as the object of reverent trust. It is just in order to give expression to the inexhaustible many-sidedness, first of all of its qualities of self-impartation, that all the relations of love between human beings are employed as a figure of the divine love—bridegroom and bride, friend, mother, father. The love of God surpasses them all, e.g. a mother's love (Is. xlix. 15), a father's (Hebrews xii. 5 ff.). At this point we must further refer to the separate attributes, as they are called, of the divine love—goodness, kindness, faithfulness, longsuffering, patience, mercy, grace. The latter portion of these urges us to adore the intensity and constancy of the divine self-surrender, particularly in its struggle against the opposition from human lovelessness, not simply in its expectancy with regard to such as, being subject to temporal development, are able only gradually to open their hearts to the divine love. God's love is love to His enemy (Luke xv.), and the triumph of this self-sacrifice on His part is the surrender of His well-beloved Son (Mt. xxi. 37, Ro. viii. 32). (See the doctrines of Sin and Redemption.) In such self-sacrifice the blessedness of God consists. The nature of true love is that it seeks not its own, but the good of the other, and that it finds its life

in the very act of losing it (Mt. xvi. 25). This is true of our love because, in the first instance, it is fully true of the love of God. The gods imagined by man, though at times beneficent and helpful in the face of human need, yet in the last resort find their blessedness in their selfishness, even if their self-satisfaction be of a highly ethereal esthetic type; the God who reveals Himself to us finds His blessedness in self-surrender (e.g. Luke xv. 1-7). Consequently those definitions fall far short of the Christian standpoint, which tell us that God's blessedness flows from His self-sufficient fullness of life; and it helps matters very little when we have the addition—"and from His moral perfection" (Luthardt). Indeed the reason why the New Testament so seldom uses the word *blessed* of God (1 Tim. i. 11), is perhaps just that the first Church was far too apt to find in it a reminiscence of the quite different blessedness attributed to the Gods of Greece.

But it is only when brought into connexion with the other characteristic of the concept of love, that the one which we have hitherto emphasized, namely its desire for the well-being of and pleasure in its object, comes quite clearly to view in its import for the Christian concept of God. I refer to its being a desire for fellowship for the realization of common ends. If God's nature is really love, He can set us no higher end than that we may find blessedness in His love, and upon this as a basis ourselves learn to love Him who has first loved us, and in loving Him to love all others whom He loves along with us. Were it otherwise, He would be withholding something, giving less than Himself, consequently would not be loving. This truth is comprehensively stated in the conception of the Kingdom of God; the Kingdom of God is the common supreme pur-

pose for the realization of which God draws us into fellowship with Himself.

In such consideration of the nature of love as regards its two fundamental features, there is involved a series of important qualifications of a more specific kind. In the first place, because love shares its own supreme end with its object, God's love in the strict sense of the term does not extend to all His creatures, but only to those who are qualified to enter into loving fellowship with Himself, those who are capable of personal life of a spiritual and ethical kind. All else is related to them as the means to the end; and in all else they themselves should not see their highest end. Further, the fellowship of individuals of which we speak, which is to form the Kingdom of God, cannot, like nature, be set up by the fiat of His omnipotence, but must be trained through a historical process for freedom and by means of freedom, as they rise from the state in which they are conditioned by nature. Because God is love and desires love, He desires freedom: however many difficulties this statement involves, we cannot get away from it; in fact it is a touchstone to show whether the idea of God is conceived in the sense which is really Christian, or whether influences derived from Neo-Platonism, with its speculation on the Absolute, compromise the purity of it. But because in history spiritual communities always come into being round some personal centre which determines their character, the immediate object of the Divine Love is the Person in whom God's Kingdom is realized, namely Christ (1 Cor. xv. 47; see Doctrine of Christ, and what we have already said concerning revelation). Specially important is the third truth, resulting from this, that the love of God, though as regards its intention absolutely without limit, must be conscious of a possible limit just because it is love; namely where

it comes into contact with its direct opposite on the part of its objects, their determined refusal to let themselves be loved, even in spite of the highest conceivable revelation of the divine love. A desire for fellowship of such intensity that oneness of purpose is really at stake, in reference not to some incidental ends, but to the supreme end which constitutes the very being of the person concerned, an absolute surrender of so self-sacrificing a nature as has been before us, conformable to such a desire, would no longer be love at all; it would not be the act of a person, but natural necessity, without this possible limit implied in the very idea of love. Love does not seek to compel love, because it cannot do so without ceasing to be itself.

For the last-mentioned negative pole of actual love, the most apposite designation is the Scriptural one of *holy love*. Only here again it must not be forgotten that such expressions have a long history behind them, and that every stage of this history is far from having the same abiding significance for Dogmatics. Admittedly in the word "Holy" in the Old Testament, the idea of exclusiveness is, to begin with, the decisive one: the things which are withdrawn from profane use are holy, cut off, because God is the Power above the world, however defective may be the idea of the world, and consequently of what is above the world (cf. what we said of the fundamental characteristics always found in the idea of God). Jahveh is the Holy One, because He is the Exalted One; who can stand before Him (1 Sam. VI. 20)? In bringing His enemies to naught and in delivering His people, He reveals Himself as the One, beside whom there is no other. But in the measure in which the God of Israel manifests Himself as willing the good, His holiness becomes moral uniqueness (cf. e.g. Is. VI. 3 with VI. 7). This is not to say that holiness

shows itself only in maintaining law, or in any way to approximate the old dogmatic idea of punitive righteousness ; nor is it to say, on the other hand, that the idea of holiness passes into that of love, as Menken does, upon the basis of an incorrect exegesis of Hosea XI. 8, 9 and Psalms CIII. 1 ff. But it is as the two are synthesized, that testimony can be borne to the uniqueness of God in both respects ; just because He is more and more recognized as the alone good, for the reason that His unique exaltation is recognized as exaltation of a moral nature. He makes His people holy, cuts them off from the whole world, and appropriates them to Himself in sovereign election ; He enters with them into a real fellowship, and realizes in judgment and grace the purpose He appointed for this people, one worthy of God Himself. If now in Christ, God's nature fully discloses itself as love, and it is in regard to His love that He claims to be the One beside whom there is no other, and the Incomparable, what the word *holy* describes is the majesty and sovereignty of His love in general, but in particular the fact that it is true to itself, as shown by its reaction against sin. Of course this is not to say that holiness takes its place alongside of love, and that an adjustment must be brought about between these two fundamental attributes of the divine nature, as they are supposed to be. On the contrary, it is because it is perfect love that the love of God is Holy Love. Its reaction against sin is itself love, because it is the means for overcoming the opposition to love ; and should it punish any persistent opposition to the supreme revelation of love, by departing from its importunate appeals, this also has its ground in the nature of love which cannot force itself. In this way we understand the circumstance that, in the New Testament as a matter of fact, the word *holy* is seldom found ; but where it occurs, its main purpose is to give

expression to the serious side of love, to which we have pointed, and which is necessarily implied in its nature. The name, Father, as applied to God is to be kept holy, its uniqueness is to be acknowledged, it must not be trifled with ; the reason for this is just that it gives adoring expression to the inexhaustible depths of God's love, and warns us of its majesty. This phrase of the Lord's prayer (Mt. VI. 9) is in full accord with John XVII. 11 ; 1 Peter I. 15, 17 ; Ephesians I. 4, and in their fundamental significance, with the words, " Ye would not " (Mt. XXIII. 37), which in their simple seriousness are not surpassed by the awful saying in Hebrews XII. 29. Love would not be love, if it did not demand free recognition and return, and fight against indifference and defiance, so that there could be no mistake as to its recoil from them ; in one and the same act attracting, with a free grace that is ever new, the person who has not yet come to a decision or steeled his heart, but also cutting off from itself the deliberate contemner. This is the truth which Dogmatics states most briefly in the expression, Holy Love. The " Holy " stands like an armed sentinel in front of the throne of " love ". What keeps the communion between God and man from being nothing but a pretentious empty dream, nay more, an outrageous presumption, is ultimately just that it is a communion based on love ; and to show this to be fully true, it is our business to exhaust the concept of love as holy love, down to its deepest depths. We shall find this thought at work in the whole dogmatic system, especially when we are dealing with the concept of the atonement ; but it reaches right into the eschatology.

At the close of this discussion of the statement that God is love, we see more clearly than we could have done when we started, the truth of the statement that in our religion love is not an attribute of God ; it is

indeed a *designation for His essence.* When we say "God is Love," subject and predicate are identified, and for the Christian Church this identification is the inexhaustible ground of its worship; it is never for the Church, so to speak, an analytical judgment; it is always a new feat of faith, but one that is possible only where we have revelation as a basis. The only one who, humanly speaking, could make Himself the end of His existence refuses to do so: He is love; and by the revelation of His love He evokes trust in such love,—the Christian experiences the truth that the divineness of God's own nature is found in loving. This is the fullest glimpse we can get into the unfathomable mystery. The identity of God and love, Luther gives expression to in these words of adoration: "If one were to paint God and get His likeness, he must paint such a picture as would be pure love; and again if one could paint and make a likeness of love, he would have to make such a picture as would be neither an inanimate work nor human, indeed neither angelic nor heavenly, but God Himself".

This identity of God with love is not narrowed, rather its inexhaustibleness is only all the plainer, if we emphasize once again in closing, that what was said of the concept of THE ABSOLUTE, of its legitimacy and its indispensableness even for the Christian view of God as love (p. 321 ff.), still holds good. For we referred the legitimacy of the concept of the Absolute back to the fundamental idea of all religion, that in it there is involved communion with the Power exalted above the world. If therefore this were eliminated from the Christian idea of God, it would not be an idea of religion at all. What we have now done has simply been to emphasize as strongly as possible, that the characteristic content of the Christian faith in God finds full expression in the statement that God is love; not in any measure to

weaken the conviction that He is absolutely exalted above the world, and has dominion over it. Any suspicion that our God may be a good but impotent will, a moral genius, without being master of the world, destroys the roots of all religious power. In the conflict between our intellect and our religious faith, especially in view of the enigmas of the doctrine of Providence, such an idea may perhaps be able to tempt us for an instant (as in the thoughtful work, "The Gospel of a Poor Soul");[1] but unless this temptation is conquered, the Christian religion is conquered. What Jesus knew was that with God all things are possible, that He carries His purpose of love through to victory, even if it be by way of defeat, and that His own Cross itself is embraced by the divine necessity; and His Church, bowing in adoration, testifies regarding the God who is love, that of Him, through Him and unto Him are all things (Rom. xi. 36). There is still another reason which makes it indispensable for our religious knowledge to remember that the idea of the Absolute, as a presupposition of the distinctively Christian view of God, has incontestable right; and the one reason is inseparable from the other. It preserves in safety the reverence which is indispensable for the trustful joy over the truth that God is love. Only when there is no doubt that the distinction between Creator and creature is fully maintained, do the detailed expositions of this truth leave uninfringed the fundamental religious feeling of dependence. This holds good all the more, the more uncompromising the expositions are. In Christianity the fellowship of love between God and man, in its beginning, progress and completion, has its basis in the sovereign initiative of God; in particular every pantheistic idea of a natural identification of God

[1] [See Pfleiderer's "Philosophy of Religion," E. T., Vol. II, pp. 186-188 (Trans. note)].

and man is excluded. To leave no doubt at all about this point, is the purpose of the statement we have made above: it renders false intimacy impossible; and this is necessary, because in Christianity the fellowship of love is to be taken with absolute seriousness. As Jesus calls to Himself whomsoever He will (Mk. III. 13, John XV. 16), so Paul, in a paradox of the utmost boldness, gives God's free choice its right (Rom. IX., Phil. II. 13) as against every claim of man's imagining; and it has been a privilege of the Reformed Church to safeguard the principle, *Soli Deo Gloria*, against every abuse of the other, that God is love. In this we have the complement to the characteristic gift vouchsafed to the Lutheran Church, consisting in a specially profound and tender apprehension of the "beloved Father".

There may be a difference of opinion as to how to express this presupposition of the absoluteness of the divine love. What was indicated above (p. 343 ff.) as to the original sense of the word *holy*, might suggest that it should always be used for this purpose. The O. T. passages which point in this direction are numerous, and the imperfect ideas belonging to the merely preparatory revelation, which attach to it in individual instances, might be set aside. But as we use the word, the more definite and directly ethical sense is the more natural one; and it would be hard to find another expression for this characteristic of the divine love, which is so indispensable. For these reasons it is better here to stick to the designation of the love as "world-transcending," exalted above the world and having dominion over it; or even, especially in popular usage, to speak simply of Almighty Love (cf. "Doctrine of the Attributes"). Only in that case we must be quite explicit that in speaking of the love of God as world-transcending, the expression is not used now, as it often is, with the meaning simply of

unconditionally valuable, but with that of *absolutely real*. Regarding the former nothing more need be said, but the reality of what possesses supreme value calls for the strongest emphasis; the hunger of all religion after reality, which we have often had before us, claims to be satisfied. Assuredly our religion has the strongest conceivable interest in this world-transcending reality of which we speak. Christians not merely know that they are already in actual fellowship with it, but they have in this possession the guarantee, that they will be perfected under other conditions of existence than the present. Such confidence is indeed a fundamental thought of the New Testament. The members of the Kingdom are accounted worthy to attain to "that world" (Luke xx. 35); those who are already sons wait to be received as sons (Rom. viii. 15, 23); their life is hid with Christ in God, and they will be made manifest with Him in glory (Col. iii. 3 f.); it doth not yet appear what they shall be (1 John iii. 2). But unless they bow in profoundest reverence before the unutterable mystery in God, this fundamental conviction would be a hollow fancy.

It is impossible to state briefly in a formula, what Christian piety possesses in the experience of this supernatural holy love of God: what every other religion only darkly gropes after, namely the union of the most heartfelt trust and the most reverential submission. In this experience, the word *God* is not a sublime but indistinct, or a familiar but lightly used word; on the contrary it refers to the one incomparably exalted and adorable reality. Faith in the Almighty God of love, communion with Him through faith, is really the loftiest conception that can "enter into the heart of man"; but it would not have entered any man's heart, unless God had "prepared it for them that love Him," being real communion

with God for man His creature ; humanity being sunk in Divinity, without the distinction between God and man being blotted out. Only through this faith that God is love, do we get once for all beyond a Titanic defiance ("If there were a God, I would have liked to be God myself" —Nietzsche), and beyond all mystic self-renunciation and merging in the universe. Communion with the supramundane God who is love, is always in truth the highest end that men can regard and experience as their destiny, without denying the known fact of their existence. This communion means that they are really taken up into the life of God who is love; and yet it is no presumptuous dream, which must necessarily veer round to self-renunciation, and end in their merging in the universe, as being communion with the eternal whence we have sprung. We bow before Him who raises us to the sphere of His own life: we do not merely tolerate the fact that He is incomprehensible; rather, we gladly pray to Him, because He loves us; our grateful assurance of His Revelation of Himself is in harmony with the confession, "For Thee, Incomprehensibleness is meet" (Tersteegen). Hence too, through this faith all the strange fancies, an admixture of religiosity and frivolity, disappear, which are otherwise called forth precisely by the conception of a personal God; a conception in which this God, who is only a man magnified to infinity, is at one time denied, and at another time again, as the persons concerned venture to think, becomes responsible for the incomprehensible features of the world. Then, realizing the strangeness of this proceeding, they decidedly put the world in God's place; but as they demand more of the world than it is capable of yielding, they come out of their grand, fantastic dreams and sink into Pessimism. (Cf. many of the points brought out by Fr. Vischer—

"Auch Einer"—but also well-known sayings of Luther regarding the attitude of the natural man towards his "God".)

In closing, we may again call to mind in this connexion how difficult living faith in this living God of supramundane, holy love, becomes for the modern consciousness. Indeed its noblest champions even frequently see the significance of Christianity in the fact, that it has educated the nations to independence, "to be able henceforth to reconcile themselves, no longer with God, but with their own hearts" (Ja. Burckhardt). However much personal piety may be combined with this opinion, it cuts right through the vital cord of our religion, the life of which consists in the distinction between God and man being taken seriously. "God's nature is to look below. He cannot look above, and He cannot look around, because He has nothing above Himself and no one like Himself. So He looks below Himself; therefore the deeper any one is, the more clearly do the eyes of God behold him" (Luther). To be sure, the forms of our thought are changing away from the transcendence of God, and are deepening in the measure in which we realize His immanence, rightly understood. But if the ultimate mystery is shifted to the soul of man itself, if the "God in man's own heart" is in man's heart alone, real religion ceases, and all sorts of substitutes, chiefly esthetic, take its place (cf. pp. 7 ff.). Such is the experience even of the great representatives of the modern sentiment to which we refer, as the hunger of their soul for the living God betrays itself in conflicting testimonies of another cast, often with no attempt at a reconciliation. "When I think of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it, I shall ever feel it impossible

to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible" (Romanes). When such testimonies unintentionally become sighs of yearning which name the name of Jesus, they confirm, so far as they go, the correctness of the statement regarding the inseparableness of living faith in God from Him. "Oh, if I had lived when Jesus of Nazareth was journeying through the land of Galilee, I should have followed Him, and let all pride and superciliousness go in love to Him!" (Ja. Burckhardt. Cf. among other examples Goethe's "Mysteries".) We shall often have to remind ourselves of this unity of reverence and trust in contemplating the supernatural love of God, till we get to the Doctrine of Justification.

In the name Heavenly Father as applied to God, all the moments of the Christian idea of God, as we have set it forth in the foregoing, are comprehended in a distinctively concrete form. To prove this in detail would involve repetition; the mention of it is sufficient. The name Father, as used by Christians, then, does not denote God generally as the Author of the Universe, or at least of all the life in it, nor yet as the Author of all human spirits, or at least of those who are outstanding in their natural existence. This generalizing of the idea is found in the popular residuum of the traditional Church doctrine, particularly in the commentaries on the Catechisms produced in the period of Rationalism, but also in our own day. But Luther's celebrated exposition, on the other hand, presupposes and bears emphatic testimony to the distinctively Christian view; and the more general sense is contrary to the Biblical usage, as well as to the fundamental idea of revelation. God the Father is Creator, but it is not as Creator that He is Father. Nor again must we connect the Fatherhood with the fact that, at the higher stages of self-consciousness in religion and

philosophy, the most devout and wisest are called "sons of God" (e.g. Ecclesiasticus IV. 10 f.; Wisdom II. 13; Plato); however much value there may be in this thought too, which asserts itself indeed with a new foundation in Christianity also. Rather is the Christian use of the term Father based upon those passages of the O.T. which designate God the Father of His people; not because He has bestowed upon them their natural existence, but because He has given them their distinctive part in history, and in particular their unique religious standing, making Israel His first-born son (cf. e.g. Exod. XIX. 5 ff. with parallels, and Is. XL. ff.). But in Jesus He has revealed Himself as the love which unites with Himself and with each other, the spiritual beings created by Him for His kingdom—the personal fellowship of love of which we have spoken,—and it is only this which gives us the Christian sense of the term Father as applied to God. It thus follows for the reason already given, that God is immediately the Father of Jesus Christ, towards whom, as the One who personally brings about this fellowship and carries it through, His love is immediately directed, and is our Father through Him,—is the Father of this Son, and through Him of many sons. In token of this dependence, the word "Abba" which Jesus used in addressing His Father has been adopted by all who have courage through Him to use it for themselves (Rom. VIII. 15). As such a Father, namely as love, He is the God who alone is good (Mt. XIX. 17), —the perfect Father (Mt. v. 48). This excludes every weakly sentimental abuse of the name Father; for as the love had to be defined as holy love, the truth is already in the forefront, that the Father to whom Christians appeal is the Holy One, whose name as Father must be kept Holy. In elaborating the statement that God is love, we had to emphasize the truth that this love is

exalted above and is master over the world. These aspects of the truth are safeguarded by the words *in Heaven*, which we find upon the lips of Jesus Himself, added to the name Father. Faith is thus assured that He it is, of whom, through whom and unto whom are all things ; and there are maintained towards Him that reverence and humility, without which the name Father applied to Him, would be not an empty word merely, but an act of blasphemy. So far as this keynote of submission, which trills in every prayer to the Father, can be expressed in words, we find it in hymns, like "All-Sufficient Being". And this truth is of quite special significance for our day. The message which the prophet proclaims upon the heights of culture for his Supermen that God is dead, is only too prevalent on lower levels, causing a thoroughgoing insensibility to spiritual things. But we often find that even those circles who speak readily and loudly of God as love, are not thrilled through and through, as we should expect, by the mystery of the eternal.

But the Christian Doctrine of God would not be at all adequately set forth, unless in every portion it brought home to us, in a perfectly natural manner, and not at all by way of an addition forming a "practical application," the importance of its conclusions for our earthly experience. Its downright earnestness, its call to truly personal, most reverential submission, with full trust in the heart, is by no means due merely to that aspect of the Christian conception of God which we brought forward last, but as much to its most characteristic content, expressed in the statement that God is love. Now as it is certain that only in Jesus the love of God is perfectly revealed, and therefore that perfect faith is realized only in the sphere of that Revelation, it is equally certain that the Christian in particular, keeping in view the

content of such Revelation, is forbidden in any degree to overrate Revelation in its external features. Just because God has been revealed as holy love, the Christian has to acknowledge any honest faith in God though not yet fully revealed,—has indeed to bow in presence of it, —so that he himself may do honour to the greater gift, by a trust which is more complete. A specially grand expression for this telling reminder to Christians, is found in the pronouncement of St. Paul in Romans II., regarding those who, "by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality"; though this is itself only an adumbration of the words of Jesus in Matthew XXV., in the great parable of the Judgment (cf. Eschatology).

If every truth becomes clearer when we compare it, not only with its opposite, but often still more almost, when we compare it with imperfect representations of itself, it may not be unprofitable, at the close of this exposition of the Christian view of God, to refer to IMPERFECT INTERPRETATIONS of the idea of the love of God, at least in the form of a short survey. We distinguish them according as we meet them in the Christian philosophy of religion, or in Dogmatics proper. As regards the first group, we have first of all to mention the evaporation of the distinctively Christian idea of the love of God, or sonship to God in His Kingdom, into that of a universal spiritual kinship in essence and oneness of nature between God and man—an incarnation of God in mankind, and that to the detriment of what is ethical. We meet with this in innumerable shapes and colours, from ancient Gnosticism to various forms assumed by the modern consciousness: then, to come to details, "converse with nature in our own bosoms" may be felt to be service of God, and the "God who stands in immediate union with nature may be looked upon as the

proper God" (Goethe); or the divine thought may attain to self-consciousness in the thought of the human spirit (Hegel),—all of which admit of infinite modifications and combinations. To views of the latter description, the flashy concept of Monism invites at present in a seductive fashion; but of this we have to speak again immediately. Then again the unity of God and man may be defined in an essentially ethical way, but so as to do harm to the directly religious relation; and this also may be done with many differences in detail, and not only as it was in Rationalism. And the claim of Theosophy rises, it is supposed, above both these one-sided positions: above thought and volition stands immediate vision, and the supreme idea is that of life. God is essentially Personality and Love; and thus it is believed that all the great enigmas, the Personality of God, the existence of the world and sin, find their solution once for all. In truth this is to endanger the distinctively Christian fundamental idea, to say nothing of the fact that hitherto no one has succeeded in stating fully and clearly the epistemological foundation. Only at the same time it must be emphasized that not only is the intention, especially in Jacob Boehme himself, to Christianize all thought, but that even the imperfect execution possesses the value of a prophecy of another stage in our knowledge, that, namely, which in the New Testament is called "sight," but is there expressly reserved for the other world (2 Cor. v. 7, 1 John III. 2). A combination of all these tendencies is found in the most modern attitude, one that is so widespread, of romantic mysticism; which, when it requires a name for the indefinite object of its homage, rejoices in that of Monism. It will occupy our attention further in the Doctrine of the World, because the chief consideration that led to the rise of Monism was really the interest of understanding the world, not in the first

instance a consciously religious interest. Here, however, we had to allude all the more emphatically to this religious application of it, because (cf. what we said near the beginning, p. 9 ff.) often it is recommended, with good intention but without clearness of thought, as a means for modernizing Christianity. E.g. Campbell (1909) alleges, as a characteristic of the "New Theology," that it carries out fully and consistently the truth regarding the Divine immanence. God and the world are held to become intelligible, if taken in conjunction with each other, when the world is understood as God's realization of Himself: this is a "Pantheism which finds the whole fulness of our self-consciousness hidden in God"; not that dreary type of Pantheism which philosophy puts before us, but a purely "active" species, having as its watchwords, "spiritualizing and moralizing, indeed love,"—a bold flight, in which one mounts up without concern above the facts of experience; though undoubtedly there are also elements of the actual Gospel enforced, which for long received scant justice.

In the field of theology proper, on the other hand, we refer especially to two aberrations from the common Christian idea of God, which have been and still are of importance. One is the co-ordination of the divine mercy and righteousness which was a test question in the old Protestant Orthodoxy. It is in the doctrine of the atonement that its most important consequence appears, but even there it cannot be explained unless we are able to refer to indispensable statements derived from the doctrine of sin. The other is the Scotist and Socinian concept of God, according to which the divine will is thought of as caprice: God can deal with man as He pleases, but from a sense of fairness bestows upon him certain rights. Luke xvii. 10 was often groundlessly supposed to support this view. Both these

diverging views find their ultimate support in the fact that the concept of Holy Love—of the Heavenly Father—is not accepted in the full distinctive sense of revelation, but has mixed with it foreign ideas of the Absolute, as these penetrated into the thought of the Church from Greek philosophy. On the other hand, when we follow out the fundamental idea of Christianity without reserve, the "Absolute" really comes to its own. And the "modern" man, struck dumb in presence of the "Inconceivable," never attains to such profound personal reverence as that which characterizes the sentiment in which Christianity is rooted.

As a *last problem* of the doctrine of God, we may ask at this point whether the definition of God as love, in our earlier expositions of it, the superiority of which to the views last dealt with needs no proof, is complete —whether there is not one element still lacking. In other words, the question arises whether the love of God exhausts itself as love to the world, the Kingdom of created spirits destined for the Kingdom of God. That this Kingdom is for God no incidental purpose, must be admitted by every one who at all acknowledges the standpoint of revelation. Its testimony indeed incessantly emphasizes the eternal counsel of Divine love (Mt. xxv. 34, Eph. i. 4, and parallels). This is recognized by our old divines themselves, and it is in opposition to the idea of caprice in God of which we spoke, that they do so. But they hurry away from this thought to another, which is in their view still more profound: God as the Triune One loves Himself eternally. Now in any case the necessity of this last thought cannot be proved by the consideration, that God would be rendered finite by His love to the Kingdom of God which comes into being in time. For this assertion is not Christian at all, but Neo-Platonic as we have already seen. Christian

faith necessitates our positing some sort of relation of God to history, as real for God Himself, as the doctrine of the Eternity of God brings out more precisely. Consequently we must put the question before us as follows: Can the world be for the love of God the object which fully satisfies that love? Only from the standpoint which is here advocated, this is a subject upon which nothing can possibly be said upon the basis of general considerations. For our problem such considerations are particularly ineffective; we can as little prove that the other object of which we speak is necessary for the love of God, as on the other hand we can the assertion, that God's Trinitarian love would be self-love, and so not love. With both assertions we quite manifestly pass the bounds within which our knowledge is competent. The question must rather be put in this form: Does it arise when we take our stand upon revelation, and if so how can it be answered when we make revelation our basis? This is doubtless a question which we cannot answer at this stage, till we have considered the revelation of God in Christ in all its aspects. There is no foundation at all for any sort of Christian doctrine of the Trinity, unless we find such in Christology.

THE WORLD (AS GOD'S)

We have already pointed out how this division stands related to the one before it, and also to those that follow (pp. 317 ff.); also that in it we are to deal first with the world considered apart from sin, and then with the world as sinful.

The World Considered without Reference to Sin

Here we take first the world generally, and then man in particular.

THE WORLD

Statement of the Problem

Our guiding principles with regard to *method*, as they relate to the ground and norm, and consequently to the content and compass as well as the nature, of doctrinal knowledge, which followed from our Apologetics, and were recalled at the commencement of our doctrine of God (pp. 317 ff.), hold good without any modification for the doctrine of the world likewise. Here, seeing that we can take our doctrine of God for granted, it is sufficient to state quite briefly, that only such statements regarding the world and man as give expression to what the world is for the world-transcending love of God, which wills the Kingdom of God, have any right to a place in Christian Dogmatics. Especially at this point, even more directly than there, we see clearly how limited the compass of Christian doctrinal statement is: all purely metaphysical speculations regarding the relation of the infinite and the finite are excluded, as well as all investigations which belong purely to natural science. But equally obvious is the necessity of again making good the apologetic position, that neither such speculations nor the results of natural science, come into conflict with the doctrines of which we speak. A proof of this can be successful, only if Dogmatics confines itself to its limits in both directions in the strictest possible way: the danger of overstepping these limits is even more widespread in this section of our subject, than in the doctrine of God. Remembering this danger before we start, we lay down *the* FUNDAMENTAL *Christian* IDEA *regarding the world as God's.*

This is just what stands at the head of our section —that this world is God's world, that it belongs to the God whose nature we have learned to know as love. This fundamental idea receives concrete expression in

the attitude of Jesus to the world. Jesus conducts Himself in it with the freedom and assurance befitting the Son of the Father, to whom, in the fellowship of love with the Father, belongs all that is the Father's. The world can never occupy the first place. This is reserved for the love of the Father, and the supreme purpose which this love realizes, the Kingdom of love. But again, on the other hand, as certainly as the world is not the supreme thing, so certain is it that it is not nothing; for in the world and from the world, God builds up His Kingdom.

But it is not easy to carry out this fundamental principle clearly on all sides. With this in view, we mention in order the many questions which from time to time force themselves upon us in the doctrine of the world—questions which, though they are apt to go beyond the proper limits of Dogmatics, are yet all of them at bottom far from being factitious. The best known is the distinction of creation and preservation; it is equally well known what difficulties this distinction involves, as soon as a real attempt is made to understand the terms. At all events, it is apt to give the question of the origin, as distinguished from the present condition, of the world a more independent significance than follows immediately from Christian faith. All the more so, if the idea of preservation, which rouses no religious warmth, takes its place alongside of that of creation, as having equal rights; whereas in our old divines it was a corollary along with the latter to the comprehensive concept of Providence. Consequently it was much less independent: rather it was merely a presupposition of the government of the world, supplemented moreover by the idea of co-operation, which was intended expressly to emphasize the living nature of the divine relation to the created world. Within this framework there next

arose a series of separate puzzling questions: as to how far the world owes its existence to the free-will of God, which, however, does not mean to caprice on His part; how far, that is, to an inner necessity of the Divine nature; whether it was created for God's glory, or for the blessedness of men; what is the Christian standpoint regarding God's transcendence over the world, and His immanence in the world; what is meant when we say that the world was "created out of nothing"; especially also in what way, speaking generally and in reference to all these points, we have to understand the Biblical expressions to the effect that the world owes its existence to the Word or Spirit of God. All these questions may be arranged on further reflection in two groups: on the one hand, how is the world constituted? on the other, wherefore and whereunto is the world? Or we must deal with the nature of the world on the one hand, and its ground and purpose on the other. The latter group of questions is the more easily answered. It is true that the question of the nature of the world appears the easier, inasmuch as a sure answer is given to it in our immediate experience. But as soon as reflection is directed to the problem—What then in its inmost nature is this existence in space and time, of content so rich, as it is related to the Eternal God of love?—abysmal depths, impenetrable to our thought, open up before us and become darker the more we peer into them. The finite in its relation to the infinite, which is the fundamental enigma of all human knowledge, for it is that of our existence, is for Christian faith all the more mysterious, as what faith has to do with is the relation of the living God who is love, to a world in which the Kingdom of personal beings, beloved by Him and loving Him and each other, is to actualize itself. However, this mystery has always afforded scope for

the reflection of minds of the profounder type; and it finds, e.g. in Aristotle's saying, that "nature is not a god, but a demigod," a clearer expression than in that hasty identification of God and nature which is so often attempted, but does no more than merely conceal the difficulty. Amid this perplexity we realize at least this one thing that, so far as the question of the nature of the world in its relation to God admits of any answer at all, the answer will be found in that to our second group of questions, those relating to the ground and purpose of the world. And as a matter of fact, more direct light is cast by revelation upon the question of the purpose of the world, than upon that of its ground: the ground itself needs the purpose to elucidate it. Accordingly we invert the order of the MAIN QUESTIONS we have indicated, and deal first with the purpose and ground of the world, and then ask, What is the world? As we treat of each of these points, the various great traditional problems mentioned above will find their own natural place, and the whole will issue in a discussion of the Word and Spirit of God.

The answer to the question of the *end or purpose of the world*, is directly implied in the Christian faith in God as love. The world has its end in the love of God, which directs itself to the realization of the Kingdom of God. The world is the means to this end, nothing but the means, but also as the means really necessary. The direct means are the finite spirits who, ceasing to be conditioned by nature, are destined to become members of the Kingdom of God; the indirect, the whole world as the means for this advance of theirs. In saying this, we are adding nothing new to the Christian faith in God, as on the other hand the statement itself has no meaning apart from the presupposition of Christian faith; but we are contemplating it explicitly from a definite point of

view. If God wills the supreme end of His love, His Kingdom, He must necessarily will the world as the means for His end, otherwise His end would be incapable of realization ; and indeed He must will the quite definite world that we know, otherwise He would not will the best means for the best end. But He wills it only as the means, otherwise His end would not be His end. This fundamental formula which is a double-faced unity, is for faith no empty formula. Its life is the assurance that absolutely the whole world is the means for God's purpose—that all things work for the best to them that love God. The Lord's Prayer uniformly testifies to this assurance ; even temptation and evil are embraced as means by God's good will, which is to be done in earth as it is in Heaven, and in the doing of which God's Kingdom comes. But this other point is also of great significance for faith : means is always means, and when the end is reached, the means has done its work. That applies to everything in particular in this present world, and to the world as a whole. When once the structure of the Kingdom of God in its earthly temporal form is complete, the whole scaffolding is removed ; new means serve the eternal purpose : we wait for a new heaven and a new earth. With sublime simplicity Paul sums up all this in the phrase, "Unto Him are all things" (Rom. xi. 36). But because the realization of the Divine purpose depends, as we saw when dealing with the love of God, upon His revelation in Christ, and He is its original object, we can also say, "All things are created unto Christ" (Col. i. 16).

When we state that the end of the world is the Kingdom of God, and that the world is the means for the Kingdom of God, the great problem of olden days, *whether the world exists for the glory of God, or for the blessedness of man,* has found its solution. We have got beyond

such a way of putting the question : it is not a case of an alternative. If God is love, His end and ours coincide. When we are dealing with the gods of the world, the creation of man's own imagination, there may be conflict between their glory and the well-being of their subjects; but for the true God, who is good, eternal blessedness springs from the love that confers bliss. And anything further that may be alleged,—say, as to God's joy in creating, apart from the fulfilment of His supreme purpose—so far as it is clear and well warranted, may be taken up into our proposition. But the assertion may also encourage useless dreaming. For with the supreme purpose there must, humanly speaking, be associated even the boldest play of such Divine fancy ; although there is likewise an attendant freedom which is not transparent to us at present.

The second question, "Why does the world exist?" receives its answer from the one that we have already discussed, "Whereunto does the world exist?" If the supreme purpose of the world is to be the means for God's purpose, the Almighty love of God must be its sole ground ; if it is "unto" Him it must be "from" Him, as the two are placed side by side in the Pauline doxology. For if, speaking generally, every purpose is real in the measure in which it is master of the means for its own realization, the reality of the supreme purpose is inseparably bound up with absolute power to provide all the means for it. Indeed this is just what ordinary language means by the word "create," the use of which, accordingly, it confines to such human activity as resembles the divine activity in the respect indicated, or is supposed to resemble it. Of course this statement regarding the ground of the world, in correspondence with the previous one regarding its purpose, may likewise be interpreted in two ways : the world is only *of* God,

but it *is* of God. And when we find in the New Testament, together with the phrase "of Him," the other expression "through Him," and when it is said besides that everything that exists is full of God, these variants serve the interest of faith, enabling us to realize vividly the world's dependence on God in different relations, which will naturally present themselves to us again in what follows. Something similar applies to the use of the preposition *in* ("in Him"), comprising as it does, in a certain sense, "to, of, and through". But because the judgment regarding the origin of the world is based entirely upon the judgment regarding its end, and its end is inseparable from the revelation of God in Christ, on this account, in the New Testament its origin also is referred back derivatively to Christ, and we are told that all things are created through Him (Col. 1. 16); a statement in regard to which the question whether, and how far, this is to be construed as a personal relation to the creation of the world, must be reserved for Christology.

In saying that the sole ground of the world is the love of God, and that the world is absolutely from God, we have at the same time answered another of the standing questions of which we spoke, so far as it admits of a rational answer; namely, whether *the world* is *necessary* for God, or has been brought into existence by a *free* act on His part. We have passed beyond this statement of the question also; such an alternative does not exist. Because God is Love, He necessarily wills the world as the object of His love, but this necessity is not compulsion: it is, on the contrary, the highest freedom of the good will; and for this same reason this freedom is not caprice. In other words, the world is as little a necessary effluence from God or development of God (Emanation or Evolution), as it is the plaything of His

whim. This follows logically from the idea of the love of God, as we have discussed it (pp. 339 ff.). Only the answer we have given safeguards for faith its reverent gratitude. It is true that to revel in the thought of the caprice of God, appears to many to afford a still more sure foundation for humility on man's part; but they fail to note that under such circumstances we can no longer have genuine trust, and consequently cannot have real humility. On the other hand, Christian piety knows no other necessity which God found for creating the world except that of love. The idea which is so much in vogue at present, that the history of the world is God's redemption of Himself, contradicts the fundamental attitude of Christianity towards God: the idea which is so important, in Ethics especially, that we are fellow-workers with God, is moulded on a different principle. No doubt in the truth of the Atonement as set forth in Christianity, we shall come to see incomparable devotion to the world on God's part; but even this is devotion on the part of One who is distinguished from the world and is the Ruler of it. If it is objected that our answer to the question now discussed does not satisfy knowledge, we may say that to wish to know more leads in this instance, as in that other of which we spoke, to the meaningless question how God can be God.

When one considers in their mutual relations the two positions which we have laid down so far regarding the end and ground of the world, as they are determined by faith in God, it is clear that the first is a direct consequence of the faith that God is Love, while the second is an inference from the nature of that love, presupposed in such faith, and defined with greater precision as "world-transcending" or "absolute" (to use the word quite as on pp. 348 ff.), but that both are derived from the one elemental thought that God is love. We

have now to derive from both positions what we can say *regarding the nature of the world*, which, though not much, is yet sufficient. In accordance with the relation which we have just mentioned between the two statements regarding the purpose and the ground of the world, we have to deduce first of all from the former, a statement regarding the nature of the world according to its *content*, as it definitely presents itself to us ; and from the second, a statement regarding the *form* of its existence, the condition of its being, though the two form an inseparable unity.

As regards the former, the world must have some sort of affinity with God, some term of comparison with Him, just as on the other hand it must be something different from God. To deny either of these statements would be to nullify the concept of the love of God, for it demands an object distinct from God, which, however, out of His desire for its well-being and pleasure in it, can become one with Him in community of purpose (pp. 339 ff.). The world must be planned with a view to love and, as a presupposition of this, to spiritual life, and consequently to transcending space and time ; but at the same time, it must not as yet be love or spiritual life, but only be in process of becoming such, and that too subject to the limits of space and time. These are necessary thoughts, but the elaboration of them in detail is beyond the power of our earthly knowledge ; for even these last statements of ours contain nothing that is essentially new, as compared with the guiding principle with which we started, but are actually liable to be misinterpreted : how often is the conclusion of the necessity of sin drawn from the thought, that the world is not yet spiritual life or love, but is only in process of becoming such,—"not yet" being turned into a logical contrary ! We experience, we may say now with still

greater clearness than before, what the world as related to God is in its nature. But our concepts do not carry us beyond the thought, that it is the means for the realization of the Divine purpose of love. It is not granted to us to fathom the working of these means in detail; indeed, in the Doctrine of Providence, we shall come upon enigmas in this regard, which are of altogether exceptional difficulty. Only we understand further, that this experience would be something different, it would contradict its supreme purpose, if it lay open to our knowledge with the power to compel assent that belongs to a question in addition (pp. 149 f.). In other words, we are standing once more at the portals of the one great mystery, the significance of which will gradually become clearer to us, as we proceed with our presentation of Dogmatics, without its ever ceasing to be a mystery. It occupies us when dealing with the conception of the Personality and Eternity of God, of Sin, in Christology, in the Doctrine of the Spirit, in that of Regeneration, in Eschatology; and already, in principle, it formed the distinctive problem of Apologetics, when we were determining the relation between faith and knowledge.

Once more, the statement we have made—our first, regarding the nature of the world—gives us the answer to one of the stock problems of theological tradition, naturally of course with the same limitations as before. That is to say, the directly religious meaning of the problem of the Immanence and the Transcendence of God, is seen to be simply what we have just acquainted ourselves with. The one emphasizes the likeness between God and the world, which is necessary for the sake of His love; the other, the unlikeness which is equally necessary. For living Christianity, the one is as necessary as the other. But there is harm which it is

difficult to obviate, arising from the fact that the friends of our religion allow themselves far too often to be persuaded by its adversaries, that when we emphasize the Immanence, without which in truth the most vital interests of piety are compromised, the result is Pantheism. This opinion is based on a misty idealistic conception of Pantheism, and on a conception of Theism which is equally misty, being a caricature; a matter which we had to emphasize again and again, and will yet have to emphasize in what follows. Here, however, it should further be expressly remarked that the words Transcendence and Immanence are used in a variety of senses, especially to include the truth which we are to discuss directly, that of the nature of the world according to its form. In fact the two questions are inseparable.

The question, how is the world conditioned? must be answered in a *formal* point of view with a similar necessary principle, which again we are incapable of applying in detail: it is absolutely dependent upon God, and it is relatively independent in relation to God; both of which statements are to be understood in the sense which follows from the concept of the love of God (considered in this case primarily as the ground, just as before it was considered primarily as the end of the world). Dependence in the sense of natural necessity, makes love quite impossible; independence, in the sense of the doing away with the distinction between creature and Creator, does away with the love of God. For this reason, such dependence and freedom do not involve any contradiction for the experience of faith, but obviously they call for more precise definition. At our present stage, there are many concepts still lacking, before the problem can be so much as clearly put. In especial, it would not yet be possible to explain what

enormous importance belongs to the relative independence of the world of which we speak, in its bearing upon religious and moral personality as related to God's government of the world. It is only when we reach the sections dealing with Providence and Sin, that we shall have more precise information upon this subject. Similarly the general question of the relation of the divine causality to finite causes, is reserved for the place where it comes into consideration in view of the interests of faith.

Here also one of the traditional questions finds its answer, and in fact the one of them which most stands in the forefront of human thought, that relating to the twin-concepts of *creation* and *preservation*. Even irrespective of the fact that the word "preserve," which is equivalent to "prevent detriment," is not appropriate as applied to God in His relation to the world, simply to understand the distinction between *creation* and *preservation* as one between beginning and continuance, establishing and being established, existence and development, conveys a clear idea only to the person who is not yet alive to the problem of time in relation to God and the world—say, the general problem of the Infinite and the finite—or aware that it is one that cannot be solved. This seems to indicate that the one concept should be resolved into the other. Only the reduction of preservation to creation, and the assumption in consequence of a continuous creation, though it does give living expression to the complete dependence of the world upon God, and the living reality of His activity in every moment of the development, not only fails to satisfy the interest which we have asserted above in the relative independence of the world, but endangers it in favour of a purely natural absolute dependence. On the other hand, the resolving of creation into preservation, as at-

tempted by Schleiermacher, if the concept is really to have a definite meaning, endangers God's sovereignty over the world in the Christian sense, the divine freedom of the love of God of which we spoke, as distinguished from natural necessity. One should not be led to have any doubt as to this result, one which is undeniable, by the fact that the argumentation in Schleiermacher's exposition may in the first instance produce the opposite impression, that it is just in this way alone that the independence of the world, and its dependence on God, are preserved. The reason for this appearance is found in Schleiermacher's concept of God. These attempts consequently show that to reduce the two concepts to one of them, always injures one interest of faith, which in one and the same experience does justice to both, the complete dependence of the world upon God on the one hand, and its relative independence on the other ; as the statement we have made above asserts provisionally, expressly reserving more detailed explanation. In the sense of this statement, therefore, both concepts are to be maintained, to give expression to the two needs of faith, which are in reality one and the same need. We may therefore be allowed to give lively expression once more to the pure Christian conviction ; as we are constrained to do in connexion with each of the conceptions just treated. Our reverential trust looks to the God who wills such a world. And we know by faith why we concede no other idea with regard to the world : it would not lead us on to profounder trust and profounder reverence, but would injure us in both respects.

In connexion with this topic, an idea finds its proper place which deserves mention because of its historical importance, if for no other reason, that namely of the Creation of the world "out of nothing". Its exegetical foundation is 2 Maccabees VII. 28, whereas

in Hebrews xi. 3 it is only implied. The words, "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear," mean that in Creation God had the intention of making us understand that the visible is made out of the invisible, and that only faith can comprehend this. We have the thought expressed in the most purely religious sense in Romans iv. 17. The epigrammatic phrase, "out of nothing," is therefore the strongest conceivable way of denying that matter has any sort of existence independently of God. It was for this reason that the phrase became the watchword of early Christianity, in its conflict with the ancient view of the world, as possessed of some sort of false independence in relation to God, and in its rejection of every false identification of the world with God; for the one error leads necessarily to the other. Its victory here was a victory over all infra-Christian dualism as well as all Pantheistic monism (emanation or evolution). In all our modern battles against any unchristian construction of the concepts in question (matter, space, and time, view of the world, development), we may employ the old phrase as a brief designation for the Christian fundamental idea regarding the world, or more accurately for those aspects of it which emphasize the unconditional dependence of the world upon God, and the fact that it is different from God—truths which must be emphasized, otherwise it is impossible to maintain those others, which in their way are equally indispensable, namely the relative independence of the world in relation to God, and its likeness to Him.

We have still to deal with the fact that, and the extent to which, all these statements regarding the goal and the ground of the world, as well as its nature as defined thereby, correspond to the Biblical assertions that

the world was created by *the Word* and *Spirit of God.* In the Old Testament the world is referred to the Word or Spirit of God, whether alone or in conjunction, as Genesis I. and Psalm XXXIII. 6 with their parallels soon show. This is so, both when the reference is to its existence generally, and when it is to its continuance, and progress. In the New Testament in these connexions the Word stands in the forefront. Inasmuch as the Word is the utterance or revelation of the Will, and of course of a Will that has a definite content, is rational and sets itself an end, the expression that the world was called into being by the Word of God, and is sustained by the Word of His Power, emphasizes the fact that the world is determined absolutely by—is absolutely dependent upon —God, and its unlikeness to God ; for we cannot express the absolute determination of a matter by our wills more strongly, than by saying that the utterance of our wills is the sole ground of its existence. In the whole compass of the world, in inanimate nature (Gen. I. 4), in animal life (Num. XVI. 22), in the religious as also the moral life of the Church (Rom VIII.), Holy Scripture sees the working of the *Spirit* of God. The word is therefore used in very many ways, as regards the extent of the Spirit's working. The idea of the Spirit is a difficult one too, because He appears at one time as an active power of God outside of God (Ps. CIV. 30 with parallels), at another as the Divine Self-consciousness (Is. XL. 13, 1 Cor. II. 1 ff.). The explanation of this is that in all the activities of which we speak, God is thought of actively, as the Person who realizes the fullness of His manifold but self-consistent purposes, which constitute the content of the Divine self-consciousness. The expression that the world owes its existence to the Spirit of God, consequently emphasizes its relative likeness to God, and its relative independence. Though

in what we have said we have emphasized primarily the distinction between the two ideas Word and Spirit, it is nevertheless clear that the two go together. God's will is in the highest degree rich in content, and in the highest degree purposeful; the purpose of God is not an unreal one and only ideal, but is a purpose that absolutely realizes itself. To use human terms, God is rational will and volitional reason. We may say then, in conclusion, that the religious significance of these Biblical expressions is just the same that we gave expression to in our statements regarding the nature of the world, upon the basis of our statements regarding the end and ground of the world. There is no need to work out the parallels in detail. They are before us, including even those stock problems which we have discussed each time by way of an appendix. Further, it need only be mentioned here that if the world is created for Christ as its end, and through Christ, it is clear why the New Testament brings the creative Word into connexion with Jesus Christ as the Mediator of salvation, and the Spirit becomes the Holy Spirit of God and Christ. But the only conclusion for our doctrine of God, which we can draw from this at our present stage, is the one already established, namely that our God as Love is a God who reveals and communicates Himself. Whether we can infer from it that there are distinctions in the inner life of the Godhead (Father, Son = Word, Spirit), can be decided only after we have dealt with the doctrines of Christ and of the Holy Spirit.

People may call these statements about God's world dry theorems, if they are only correct. It will not be difficult to follow them out and apply them; only it must not be forgotten that what is most graphic and pleasing about them belongs to Christian Ethics. There our theorems will have to be verified through the wealth

of concrete matter drawn from civilized societies. But no exposition, however attractive, can enable us to get over the acknowledged truth that in the world, if it is not to be put in the place of God, but is to remain His world, our Christian knowledge is confronted by limits, the significance of which we can understand, but which we must not overstep. If this is steadily kept in view, we shall be able to appreciate fully any descriptions from the life of the Christian's attitude of freedom as towards nature, as he masters it and enjoys it; but the inherent right of such attitude is proved by the principles we have established, while they also prevent its abuse.

Such is the fundamental Christian principle regarding the world as God's, as it can be inferred from the Christian view of God. But like this, it stands in need of

Apologetic Vindication

No successful defence is possible, as long as there are IN THE NAME OF CHRISTIAN FAITH unwarranted INVASIONS OF ALIEN SPHERES. The quickest way of passing these under review is to direct attention first of all to those which appeal to *Genesis, Chapter* I. Some of them are of a more speculative kind, others belong rather to natural science.

Under the former heading we have, e.g., the theory which inserts a fall of angels between verses 1 and 2 of that chapter; this was what made the earth waste and void, and the whole present creation is but an intermediate stage between the proper creative act of God, referred to in the words, "In the beginning" (Gen. I. 1), and "the new heaven and the new earth" of Revelation, ch. XXI. This undoubtedly does violence to the text, and that in a way which is far from unobjectionable. For one thing, it is generally found in

combination with the theosophical ideas which we rejected (p. 356 f.), regarding the evolving of the Personality of God out of His nature, which is supposed to explain the mystery of God on the one hand, and that of the world and of sin on the other, but in truth, so far from explaining it, actually does injustice to its distinctively Christian form. Again an emphasis which cannot be justified, or at all events in any way proved at our present stage, is laid upon the ruin of God's world by powers opposed to God.

More importance attaches to the scientific interpretations or, as they really are, misinterpretations, of the first chapter of the Bible. Once upon a time, in the Old Protestant Dogmatics, as at an earlier date in the Scholastic, only with even greater strictness, there was based upon the doctrine of inspiration the view, that it was an infallible source of information regarding even the external course of the creation, a sort of supernatural text-book of natural science; although in many respects the original meaning was modified, to bring it into harmony with the ancient and especially the Aristotelian view of nature, which was accepted on independent grounds. As there can no longer be any question of this, there is a widespread tendency in present-day Apologetics, which attempts as much as possible to bring the results of modern natural science into accord with the Old Testament Text. This cannot be accomplished without strained Exegesis. For example, to understand the days of Creation as periods—in itself an idea to which no exception can be taken—is contrary to the plain sense of the creation narrative. But putting the matter generally, such attempts fail to recognize the purpose of this chapter and allied portions of the Old Testament. If it had been their intention to give information free from error in

every particular regarding the manner of creation, they could not have shown such indifference in regard to the agreement of the separate statements as is actually the case, and as no one can fail to see, who so much as compares the first and second chapters of Genesis, or both, singly and together, with Psalm CIV. It is true that there is no contradiction between the fundamental religious ideas which there find expression, but it is equally true that there is no such harmony in the presentation and sequence of the separate events, as is asserted by the Apologetics of which we speak. And if the assertion is made nevertheless, it is not an amateurish fancy of no importance, but a manifest injury to faith. This is so, not merely because its certainty necessarily suffers from the attempts at harmonizing, which but soothe without convincing, but because it is wronged in its inmost nature. The purpose of the Divine revelation, namely salvation, is obscured, and so is the nature of faith as personal trust in the God who reveals Himself for our salvation. Such self-imposed faith in a revelation asserted by man, not bestowed by God, which being our own work passes only too readily into importunate dogmatism, necessarily destroys moreover the credit of genuine faith in wide circles, whose knowledge is often practically confined to the spurious. It is obvious that this judgment concerning a use of such Old Testament passages which apparently shows special faith, but in reality shows a lack of faith, is not directed against the attitude of a devout heart or of devout fellowship circles, in becoming devotionally engrossed in such passages: for them the promise given to sincerity certainly holds good here also. But we have something quite different, when such an attitude towards Scripture, one which we can respect in view of the individuals who represent it, produces in

the minds of imperfectly educated theologians some bad theory, which is then imposed on believing lay circles as a necessary demand of faith. In opposition to this, the interests of faith itself impose upon real theology the duty of making a correct application, in our present section as well as elsewhere, of the principles as to the use of Scripture which follow from its actual character, as the testimony of faith to revelation. We have to remember especially that no Christian doctrine can be based solely upon the Old Testament. Thus for the Christian doctrine of the world, the short New Testament statement that it is created for Christ, is more important than all the details found in Genesis I. But if we allow this chapter to convey to us in the first instance the exact sense it bears in the Old Testament, as testifying to the relation of God to the world applicable to the preparatory revelation, it becomes clear to us then how much it has to say even to us Christians. And the more strictly historical our attitude is, the less, e.g. we deny or minimise the undoubted points of contact between the contents of the chapter and the traditions of other peoples, especially the Babylonians, the more conspicuous will be the uniqueness of the Spirit who has claimed this material as His own, transformed its character, and made it an instrument to serve His higher end ; the more is " Babel and Bible " not an alternative between want of faith and what passes for faith, but an aid to genuine faith, humbly meditating upon the ways of God. With ever-increasing gratitude, Christendom will then recognize how certain fundamental presuppositions of its own faith, such as the absolute dependence of the world upon God of which we spoke, alongside of its relative independence, its unlikeness to God and its affinity with Him, its suitability for the supreme end, the Kingdom of God, its

significant gradations of being culminating in mankind, called to fellowship with God, are expressed with unsurpassed clearness in the words which are as simple as they are impressive, "God spoke and it was done," "let us make man," "it was all very good". But such an estimate is impossible without absolute truthfulness. With gratitude and joy therefore, the publications of the "Kepler Society" are to be welcomed, in proportion as they give us to understand with increasing clearness that the principles which we have set forth are admitted.

But even *where there is no explicit relation to Genesis*, Dogmatics has not always kept within its appointed bounds. Here, however, it is sufficient to mention briefly one or two examples. Speculations about space and time do not belong to Dogmatics, if it is meant that the one opinion on this head as such is Christian, and the other as such is unchristian; the view that the world is limited in space and time being Christian, the one that it is unlimited being unchristian. The question, which is not coincident with this one, whether recognition of the impossibility of solving this problem may perhaps be of service to Christian faith in an apologetic direction, will come before us when dealing with the eternity of God. As with regard to space and time, the same applies to theories of the nature of matter, and also to those questions which belong directly to pure natural science, in particular the development of the separate forms, inorganic and organic. But inasmuch as there is always the further possibility of conclusions being arrived at which are detrimental to the fundamental Christian principle regarding the world, we discuss these points, so far as it is necessary to discuss them at all, not from what has been our standpoint hitherto—namely that Dogmatics must confine itself to

its own proper subject—but from the other, that it must be able to defend its own fundamental principle against attacks. Only, there is one other point which should not be passed over without some mention. I refer to the attempt which is always cropping up in some form or other, to maintain in its entirety, or to restore, "the Biblical view of the world," as against the modern one. For example, it has recently been made with special energy by Lepsius. However Christian the intention may be, the result is harmful to our faith. This Biblical view of the world, as it is called, is neither Biblical, nor is it in itself clear. For nothing comes of such attempts unless we give new meanings to the Biblical words for "above" and "beneath," "Heaven," "Earth," and "the Under-world". But the manifest indefiniteness of the views which have the new meanings put upon them arouses the suspicion, that the case is no better with the actual doctrines of religious faith. The position is similar with regard to Biblical Psychology, as it is called. The truly Scriptural course on the other hand is to abandon resolutely merely temporary thought-forms in Scripture, and to be permeated with the eternal principles of revelation in our judgments regarding the world of experience.

The VINDICATION OF THE ARTICLES OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE WITH REGARD TO THE WORLD, presupposes all that was said in our Apologetics concerning faith and knowledge; here we are dealing with a definite application of it, though this again throws light upon the fundamental principles. A word first of all regarding the various general theories of the universe which are directly opposed to the Christian one. Powerfully impressed by the unchanging regularity of events in the material world, but especially by the regular interconnexion of the material and the spiritual, with which psychophysics

and psychiatry have made us specially familiar, *Materialism* reduces the whole of reality to the material, and sees in the so-called spiritual processes merely special functions of matter. But while they are inseparably combined for our experience, there is no parallelism between the two sorts of processes, and consequently the one is not reducible to the other. The concept of matter presupposed lands us in contradictions from which there is no escape. Speaking generally, that of which alone we have immediate experience—the spiritual—is derived from what is first discovered through its instrumentality—the material. All this has not only been proved irrefutably by Philosophy, as Psychology, Logic, and Epistemology, but is also admitted without dispute by an increasing number of natural scientists, who are capable of distinguishing between what is real natural science and what is fancy. Under pressure of this opposition, avowed Materialism now finds its adherents for the most part only among the imperfectly educated. All the more loudly is *Monism* extolled as the genuinely modern theory of the universe: the real is in its ultimate basis the spiritual and the material inseparably united. This idea is unexceptionable as a demand of our spirit in its struggle after oneness. It is, however, anything but a solution of the riddle of the universe. On the contrary it is an empty word, as long as the spiritual and the material processes cannot be really brought into line with each other; which means, by reason of the limitations inherent in our consciousness, for all time. As a matter of fact, consequently, the Monism of which we speak is often merely a grander word for the old Materialism, since in the application no serious attempt is made to do justice to the equal rights of the spiritual and the material. That is all the more dangerous from the fact that the indefiniteness of

the word permits of the satisfaction, at least in appearance, of other and quite different interests, especially esthetic, though also to a certain extent religious. In particular it commends itself to a countless number of the more highly educated class, as a means of combining pantheistic sentiment with exact investigation of nature, as the writings of Boelsche, and his Prefatory observations in the new edition of "Ancient Mystics" may prove. The incompatibility of such speculations with the Christian view of the world as God's, needs no further proof here; it consists—apart from the identification of God and the world—especially in the endangering of freedom, by an application of the idea of causality which admits of no proof. Regarding the scientific basis of Monism, what was brought out in our Apologetics holds good generally speaking. Though Monism is known, not without reason, as modern Spinozism, yet Spinoza's position that the order of our thoughts represents the real order of things, in its indifference to the particular questions which press upon us, and undisturbed as yet by the Criticism applied by Reason to its own powers, makes a more imposing and clearer impression, as he presents it, than we find in his modern disciples. In particular, it is to be hoped that that obscurity on the score of principle in the use made of the word Monism, which gains for him numerous adherents, should be more and more carefully examined; namely the confusion between unity in the theory of the world and the assumption of a single Substance of homogeneous content. Who would give up Monism in that first sense of the word? But who can prove that such a thing is simply possible, if the word is understood in the second sense? Indeed, who can adopt this latter position without doing violence to facts, and those too the principal facts of personal

moral life, and therefore without paying a price which real knowledge can never pay without renouncing itself?

If this monism, regarded as a deliberate system, is an opponent that must be taken seriously, the same cannot be said of half-understood modes of speech which are found at certain congresses, and in the superficial literature of popular propagandism, and which cover their emptiness with the grand word "Monism". Under this head fall *inter alia* many assertions regarding the nature of matter, the confidence of which stands in inverse ratio to their clearness, or regarding space and time, or regarding the significance of the earth in the universe as a whole, or regarding evolution,—in a word all those concepts with reference to which Christian Dogmatics was warned above against transgressing its own proper boundaries. It is neither possible nor necessary to mention now all the ways in which Natural Science or Speculation upon such points may, in their turn, overstep their proper limits, and to show where they are in error. But it is well worth our while to remind ourselves of the principle, that there are two sides to the ideas with which we are dealing, inasmuch as, regarded as a whole, they can either leave Christian faith unaffected, or on the other hand oppose it.

Christian faith is not at all affected by the concept of *matter*, so far as it appears simply as the presupposition of investigations in natural science; as such indeed it comes under consideration merely as a hypothesis for the simplest possible explanation of certain processes. But speculative philosophy can also form a concept of matter, about which Christian faith is not concerned one way or the other, that of empty space for example, or of the possible. On the other hand, the idea of "formless matter" ("the matter without form" of Wisdom XI. 17), whether it be further defined as the

Chaos of the ancients or the "Nature in God" of the Theosophists, or the sum of the atoms or of energy, if by this is meant the ultimate reality in the metaphysical sense, is not a Christian one; and here it may be noted with satisfaction, that this last-mentioned confusion between a fundamental presupposition of natural science and a tenet of metaphysics happily seems to be now getting less frequent again. Dogmatics cannot even speak of a Divine world-idea as independent of the Divine will to love, or of eternal truths as in any way limiting that will, without danger—the danger namely of doing injury to its own guiding idea of the purpose and ground of the world. Before we are aware, such matter or world-idea or eternal truths often become an obstacle to the realization of the Divine purpose. In particular, it affords ground for conceiving of evil as a necessity or for limiting finite spirits to their present type of existence, as the only one possible for them. Speculations regarding space and time naturally go with those regarding matter. We can think of some such which in like manner endanger the Christian faith in the unconditioned power of God over the world. No doubt we must here admit once more that the inclination to indulge in dangerous flights of thought of the kind, is not infrequently fostered by a claim to omniscience as regards the riddle of the universe, which is made in the name of Christian faith.

At present another of these particular questions is more in the forefront, that namely which concerns the change in our *view of the world* brought about by Copernicus, as compared with that held by the ancients. Quite a favourite weapon in the conflict with Christian faith is to ask whether our whole attitude of mind must not be essentially altered, and turned into one contrary to the Christian, if the earth is dislodged from being the

centre of the universe, and becomes simply a small body in the infinity of space. The reproach of Celsus of old about the conceit of puny man, and what is supposed to be a revelation of God in the corner of Galilee, comes before us again in a new form, and with what looks an incomparably better foundation, in the calm, dignified speech of science. This e.g. is an up-to-date method of setting to work in "The Universe and Mankind": The universe and mankind, the eternal and the temporal, what is of heavenly greatness alongside of what is of earthly littleness—it has first to be stated what causes us to unite in such bonds the universal sway of nature, and the totality of living, thinking beings. The inference is now drawn that hitherto we have confined ourselves in too one-sided a fashion to the history of mankind, without fixing our attention upon the universe as a whole: we know now the significance of the general forces of nature for the body and spirit of man, and the evolution of human civilization; we also know man's struggle with the forces of nature and the triumphal march of human progress. Thus it becomes clear to us that out of the timid beings who once fled before the powers of nature, and who thought themselves and their earth the centre of the world, in our day bold combatants have arisen who, in spite of the knowledge that man, and earth his ever-revolving habitation, are merely like a grain of dust in the infinitude of the universe, have already reduced many a gigantic enemy to slavery in the temple of civilization. Expositions of this kind show clearly what is the basis of one form of opposition to the Christian conception of the world. It is not in the facts, but in the explanation of them, or more accurately in the attitude of mind which is only partly explained by the facts, but for the most part springs from quite different sources. Where there is a living

faith, the enlarging of our conception of the world will increase our reverence, gratitude, and adoration; faith should and could be strengthened by the feeling of the vastness of God's thoughts, so unexpectedly widened and deepened. For example, the words of the Psalm, "Even the darkness is not dark with Thee," receive what is for us moderns a wonderfully impressive illustration, in the discoveries in Optics. Indeed, even the wonder which is felt as to whether perhaps God's purpose of love extends beyond this earth and its inhabitants, has long been familiar, in another form, to many a simple Bible Christian, through the faith expressed in the first period of the Church: To Christ principalities and powers are subject, and through Him God has reconciled the universe (Col. I. 16 ff.). To be sure, such words ought not to be modernized; but the narrowness of outlook with which faith is charged is not on its side. It is only if the insinuation is that the revelation of God in Christ in its inmost kernel, can be disproved or superseded, that God is not love, and that the Kingdom of the Divine love is not the supreme purpose of the world, that the Christian will feel that the widening of the horizon of which we have spoken, is detrimental to his faith. Certainly such insinuation is often implied, even when it is not expressed, in those hymns to the Universe and to mankind which, with strange inconsistency, in one breath destroy man's illusion as to his own greatness, and magnify his greatness, regarded as self-centred, till it becomes an illusion. God is reduced to dust and dust becomes God. But this is not science, and it is certainly not assent-compelling knowledge.

As this judgment regarding the geocentric view of the world brings us back to the general fundamental questions, the same is true of the *idea of evolution*, which is inseparably connected with it. That is to say, just as on the

one hand the earth is to be deprived of its commanding position, on the ground that it is found to be an accidental product alongside of others, in the immeasurably imposing evolution of the universe, instead of being a realization of a Divine purpose, so on the other man is to become conscious of his insignificance, through recognizing that he is a product of the evolution of the earth. But it cannot be denied that the products of evolution, in all their abundance, may be brought under the principles as to the end and ground of the world which, as we saw, constitute the substance of Christian religious knowledge ; they can be found to realize Divine purposes in subordination to the supreme Divine purpose. In that case, we cannot discover the shadow of a reason why faith, in its own interests, should make any demands as to the manner of their realization of it, instead of leaving the answer to this question to science, which investigates facts. It ought therefore to recognize all the facts of evolution actually proved by science, and indeed to welcome them, if God proves Himself by them as well as in other ways a God of order (1 Cor. xiv. 33). Whenever faith illegitimately passes beyond its proper limits in this direction or in any other, it invariably does itself harm ; whereas on the other hand its real interests cannot be infringed upon by any encroachment on the part of knowledge. But certainly one of the vital interests which we have in mind is opposition on principle to every deification of the idea of evolution. Compare first what was said at the outset on the Modern Consciousness, and then all the positions with reference to Faith and Knowledge, and what is to be subjoined immediately in the Doctrine of Man.

We saw before when treating the Doctrine of God, and we may now remind ourselves here, in concluding the Doctrine of the World, that it is only faith in God's

love, strengthened by active conflict, that acquires this extraordinary power of making every change in the view held regarding the world subservient to one's purpose. From it alone springs the courage that enables one to recognize the facts precisely as they stand. In the present connexion, that means that we should not hurriedly rush away from the facts that do not harmonize with the old view of the world,—e.g. awful cases of the struggle for existence or devastating catastrophes in nature on the one hand, and slow development to higher forms on the other,—and again dreamily fancy as best we can, that we believe in that old view of the world. By so acting, we not only do wrong to our sense for truth, and so also of course to our faith, but we bar the way against that deepening of our reverence and trust which God affords us, precisely by such change of the view of the world among other means. In that case, the adversaries readily appear to be not only more devoted to the truth, but more upright and more rich; whereas faith, cleaving to the truth, should have known in experience how rich it is, even in view of the greatest riches they possess. The most instructive example for us, we may say, is Goethe. His relation to what he calls God as Nature, should not be confused with what lesser minds repeat after him in opposition to the Christian faith; and it cannot be counteracted by what believers of a narrow-minded type say in the name of Christianity, in answer to him. For him, it was a new and momentous experience, surpassed only by real faith, to which he himself wistfully reached out, e.g. in the "Mysteries". But here it must suffice to point to the important truth we speak of: for the further treatment of it, all sorts of presuppositions are still wanting for us, which are got from the Doctrine of Evil and of Providence. The truest conclusion is always reached by

pointing to the great fundamental mystery of the world, to which the greatest men have often pointed with special insistence,—with paradoxical expressions indeed ; like Luther, with that saying of his which could so easily be ridiculed—" The world is an astonishing oddity ; would God it soon came to an end ". The result must just be, for reasons inherent in faith itself, that all our Christian conceptions of the world acquire their proportion, meaning and basis, simply and solely as correlates of the distinctively Christian idea of God. But here as elsewhere, faith should be cheered in its wrestling, by the recognized fact that there are no less enigmas connected with every ultimate conception that man has framed with regard to the world and God.

Man

Exposition

In the doctrine of man an accurate statement of the problem is particularly indispensable, if there is to be a possibility of truly Christian conclusions. For faith, the question of the nature of man can only mean : How must the nature of man be defined, if he is to be the object of the love of God in the Kingdom of God ? In other words, the problem has reference to the religious nature of man, and to this naturally in its distinctively Christian form. Thus the doctrine of man is fitly called the doctrine of THE IMAGE OF GOD IN HIM. There are reasons for its having this title in other religions as well as ours. In all religions there is fellowship—communion between God and man. This would be impossible without some sort of resemblance between God and man, and that, too, in reference both to the form and the content of life. Now as the fellowship originates with God, the likeness on man's part is a copy : God is the original. Consequently in every religion the idea of the image of God in man

varies with the idea of God. There is a great difference between the image of God in the heroes sprung from Zeus in the religion of Greece, and the sons of the Heavenly Father in Christianity. Further, because the content of the idea of God in every religion is defined by the revelation of God presupposed in it, so also is the idea of the Divine image. Now since for us Christians Jesus is the personal self-revelation of God, and God really works in Him under the conditions of human personality, He is the perfect image of God (2 Cor. III. 18; IV. 4 and parallels); man considered apart from Christ, is that image only in the wider sense—rudimentarily, as Paul expressly insists (1 Cor. XV. 45 ff.). Christ is the true man; we shall be changed into His likeness; we shall "put Him on" (Col. III. 10; Rom. XIII. 14).

Here, too, it is clear how sublimely simple and consistent Christian faith is. All religion claims to be fellowship of God and man, but ours is fellowship with the God who is love. God's being in man and man's being in God, is for us loving fellowship of the most personal kind. It realizes itself immediately in Christ, in us through Him. Christology and the doctrine of the appropriation of salvation have to expound in detail all that is implicit in this position; but it is always the same simple inexhaustible truth. In our connexion it means that we see in Christ what is the pure Divine Image in man.

If we seek to make *this nature of man*, so far as Dogmatics is concerned with it, that is just *the image of God in him*, more intelligible, we must express it in the form of an idea of purpose, which is to be realized. But as this purpose is the realization of personal life, this means that we must speak of the *destiny* which man is to fulfil, and of the *capacity* which makes it possible for him to fulfil it. For it lies in the nature of this image of God in us, that it cannot be called into being ready

made, like something belonging to inanimate nature, nor yet, as is the case with animate but impersonal nature, that it needs a development certainly, but only one traced beforehand with physical necessity. On the contrary, love can only be understood and reciprocated in personal surrender. The capacity certainly must be presupposed; the destiny however is not fulfilled by the mere unfolding of it, but by the free exercise of it on both sides. Consequently the habit of our old divines in speaking of the "nature" of man is a mistake. When combined with inaccurate conceptions of God's activity in Creation, it betrays us into the self-contradiction that the capacity of which we speak might be actualized immediately by a divine creative act, and the destiny fulfilled without a personal decision; in short, that the Divine image might be implanted as a thing realized. Moreover, they had in view the highest conceivable idea of the Divine image, an idea determined by the standard in Christ; consequently, if that was supposed to be implanted, they had in view perfect righteousness as implanted, and indeed, for the thought of that period, it next followed that they had in view perfection in general as implanted,—even in the matter of knowledge. In the case of our old divines a second error was naturally conjoined with this one. In dealing with the nature of man, they thought immediately of the *first man* and his actual condition in his supposed original state. That was the state of perfection, of "original implanted righteousness". As the result of the Fall, this state has been replaced by that of corruption. But not only is this idea entirely self-contradictory, as we have shown above; it is besides, as applied to the first man, quite plainly opposed to all experience. So too it is destitute of Biblical foundation. The Old Testament thinks of the first man as being at least not in a state of intel-

lectual perfection, but as requiring to be developed at all events in this respect: he is set the task of tilling the garden and keeping it (Gen. II. 15). Finally Paul sees in Christ not simply a restoration of what was implanted in the first man, but a realization of the Divine image going far beyond that; the first man was made a living soul, the second a quickening spirit (1 Cor. xv. 45 ff.). In accordance with this, the Reformers were satisfied with at least more moderate ideas of the first man. Luther speaks of Adam's childlike innocence, Calvin of his childlike relation to God; and it was our early Dogmatic theologians who first developed those measureless conceptions which we mentioned. In truth, each stage of Divine Revelation finds a corresponding stage, as regards the acceptance or the rejection of it on man's part. Man is responsible in the degree in which God approaches him at each period; but for the actual approach of God, he is actually responsible. The further exposition of this question, however, regarding the original condition of man in history, belongs to the doctrine of sin. The two questions, that of the destiny of man, together with the capacity necessary therefor, and that of the actual condition of the first man, are first clearly separated by Schleiermacher, who, by original perfection, understands simply the destiny of which we speak, as one that can be attained on the foundation of man's endowment. But when he not only strictly separates from this question the other, of the state of the first man, but immediately finds an answer to it by negativing the original innocence altogether, and declaring the necessity of the consciousness of sin for development, we have what is by no means a necessary consequence of his correct answer to the former question.

The image of God in man is thus nothing but his

destiny to become a child of God in the Kingdom of God, or the capacity necessary for the realization of this destiny. Both expressions have the same content; only in the one case the subject is looked at from the standpoint of the goal, in the other, from the beginning of the way that leads to the goal. Both moreover are indispensable, because the destiny cannot become an actuality except by the way of a personal decision, on the foundation of a definite capacity; while on the other hand the capacity secures its definiteness only in view of the goal to be reached. In speaking here of *destiny to be a child of God in the Kingdom of God*, we point, first of all, in a few words to the important truth that it is not Christian to speak of the individual man without speaking of humanity, and *vice versa*. God's love has as its object the Kingdom of God, the united fellowship of all God's children, not the individual in isolation; but just as little a society where the individual goes to the wall. Every individual has to imprint the image of God upon his own special individuality, on the foundation of his individual capacity; and he can do this only in the fellowship which includes all individuals. This fellowship is naturally constituted on the principle of sex, rank, nation, as well as of the fundamental relations affecting the whole of the inner moral life, the family, social intercourse, dominion over nature, art, science, law, and religion. As is shown by the very name, the image of God in man, and the explanation of it by reference to sonship to God in the Kingdom of God, the premier place belongs to the religious relation in the strict sense, the fellowship of love with God, who reveals His love to us, so that in trustful responsive love we can assent to it (the communion of God with us and our communion with Him). But inseparably connected with this are love to our neighbours and self-discipline, as well as

dominion over the world, matters which receive exact treatment in Ethics. If the image of God in man is thus designated from the point of view of the goal as realized destiny, from the other side we sum it up in the expression, religious and moral capacity (again in all its aspects). If man's destiny is to admit of fulfilment, we must think of him as so equipped that, while longing for that supreme inward unity and freedom (p. 61 ff., 167 ff.) which become real only in fellowship with God, he is capable, through Divine Revelation of satisfying such longing by means of fellowship with God, and letting the love of God become operative in himself (once more in all the relations mentioned above). Or to use the words of the Augsburg Confession, the Divine image, conceived of as realized, consists in the knowledge, trust, fear, and love of God (Art. 2), with which there goes the more detailed exposition of the other passages in Article 27, under the heading of Christian Perfection; for it is this article which shows in what the realized destiny of man consists. On the other hand, looking at the matter from the point of view of the capacity necessary in order to reach that goal, the Apology says (2, 17) that it consists in the disposition towards such perfection, and the power to reach it. (To be sure these passages of the Confessions seek to answer at the same time the historical question—one that lies beyond the horizon of our thought at present—of man's original condition (cf. above).) The fundamental truth that the essential point in the image of God is the religious relation, was expressed by the old divines, not quite clearly as regards form, but quite correctly in substance, by speaking of an image "in general," when they referred to all the above-mentioned moments taken together, which make man what he is, including therefore, besides the relation to God, his relations to

other men and to his own nature and to that which lies without; and distinguishing from these the main element as the most important "part,"—that element being the relation to God. In particular, dominion over the creatures and immortality were rightly regarded by them as a consequence of moral and religious perfection (while the Socinians, on the other hand, saw the essence of the Divine image in the lordship over the creation). Another distinction not to be confused with this one, and of even greater importance for the understanding of the subject, was that between the image in the wider, general and the narrower, particular, special sense. By the former they meant the formal presupposition of the Divine sonship, or of the religious capacity, that is personality in general or the capacity therefor. The image in the strict sense on the other hand, according to them, consists, not "in the possession of reason or understanding, but in the possession of such a will or understanding as understands God, and wills what God wills" (Luther).

This idea which attains to full clearness and depth in Christianity, that the essential thing in man is his moral and religious destiny, and that it is here that we are to find his superiority to all the other inhabitants of the world, even where it is not fully held in its distinctively Christian form, unites those who represent the higher development of mankind, with each other and with all who, even in the humblest fashion, actually rise to the consciousness of their worth as men. They are animated by faith in "the divinity of humanity". At times this faith finds clear utterance in prophetic tones, which assure a generation that at one time revels in self-glorification, and at another despairs of itself, that it is lost without it. "I have placed thee in the midst of the world. . . . I created thee with a nature that is

neither heavenly nor earthly, neither mortal nor immortal alone, that thou mightest be the moulder and conqueror of thyself" (J. Picus). "Those are the poverty-stricken periods, dark in spite of all the glitter of civilization, which no longer want to know anything of reverence. Thought without reverence is barren, indeed poisonous. . . . The man who cannot always wonder (and worship) . . . is but a pair of spectacles behind which there is no eye. . . . The Universe is an Oracle and Temple as well as a Kitchen and a Cattel-stall. . . . Retire into private places with thy foolish cackle, or what were better give it up and weep, not that the reign of wonder is done . . . but that thou hitherto art a Dilettante and sand-blind Pedant" (Carlyle; and cf. Goethe on reverence and religion). Such reverence, however, goes along with a deep sense of the mysteriousness of human life, and should do so. This sense also finds unique and perfect realization in Christianity.

In what we are saying we are simply bringing to the forefront once again, in connexion with our present subject, a truth which has been before us from the commencement of the doctrine of God onwards: in the Gospel of Divine sonship least of all is there a place for familiarity without reverence. But we have a particular impressive warning in this direction in the strict limitation of our knowledge of the relation of Spirit and Nature, which in the form especially of the question of the relation of body and soul, becomes the perpetual and ever-recurring riddle of our personal life. We are acquainted with development to spiritual personality only on the basis of material existence, and at the same time with the multiplicity and the individual character of finite spirits only in their distinctively material form; these incontestable positions are statements of a fact, they are not properly speaking an explanation of the

fact. If we should regard them as an explanation, they are certainly not unobjectionable from the Christian point of view, as is shown, for example, by Biedermann's position with reference to the question of the future life. This he is compelled to negative, because he affirms that it is possible to conceive of finite spirit only in substantial union with a material body. In the same way he is compelled to regard sin as a necessary stage in the development of the spirit, as it grows out of its material form of existence. The limitations of our knowledge of which we spoke, and still more the immediate experience of the mysterious connexion between our inner life, at its very highest indeed (think of prayer, for example), and our natural existence, produce the feeling to which Paul has given impressive expression (especially 2 Cor. IV., V.). Even in the Pre-Christian world, and beyond the limits of Christianity, the deepest aspirations struggle into being, out of this experience of the dualism of human nature, man's two souls, the lower and the higher, the dark and the light, the flesh and the spirit. The triumphant song, "There is naught that is stronger than man," and the dirge which speaks of the generations of men passing hence, like the leaves of the forest, do not admit of being reconciled in a convincing synthesis. The strong faith in God which meets us in the Old Testament, unites them by main force, in moments of adoration. "What is man that Thou art mindful of him? Thou hast made him a little lower than God" (Ps. VIII.). But most acutely does the Christian feel the enigma, and he fights his way through it to assured hope. He knows the earthly body not simply as an instrument willed by God, and a symbol of the spirit, but as destined for a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. VI.); while at the same time the recipient of the Holy Spirit, in a way quite different

from a great spirit, both experiences it as a "body of humiliation" (Phil. III. 21), an imperfect organ and symbol, and finds in the midst of painful limitations (2 Cor. XII. 11) peace only in the assurance of God's love, which is not confined within any earthly limits and one day makes all things new (Rev. XXI. 5). With all this, we only express anew, in connexion with the Doctrine of Man, what was affirmed and proved in the Doctrine of the World.

The view of the destiny of man, which we have thus far developed, is the PROTESTANT (in German, the EVANGELICAL). Religious and moral perfection, sonship to God in the Kingdom of God, is really "natural"; that is, it is man's proper destiny, his true nature. If we exclude this destiny from our conception of man, our idea of him is no longer genuinely Christian, as we are compelled to conceive of man, believing in revelation. The Romish doctrine, on the other hand, sees the essence of man in what is for us Protestants merely the necessary presupposition, in his being possessed of personality, equipped with reason and free will; not in the religious and moral constituent elements of personality, sonship to God. What is for us natural destiny is for Catholics supernatural exaltation, a special gift of grace superadded to man's nature. A necessary consequence of this is a somewhat different view of this higher supernatural exaltation, as it is supposed to be, which is added to man's natural condition (so to say, the higher Divine image in man in relation to the lower; for, according to an ancient piece of trifling with the Hebrew words in Genesis I. 26, where two words for *image* occur together, people used to speak of two images). This supernatural endowment is defined as victory over and renunciation of nature, as the closest possible approximation on the part of human life on earth to the superhuman angelic life. Its most

conspicuous characteristics are the renunciation of the natural instincts of acquisition, sex, and independence—poverty, chastity, and obedience. This applies to the sphere of the will; in that of the intellect we have contemplation, the fullest possible anticipation of the Heavenly Vision. It is obvious at once that such supernatural life is completely attained only in individual acts, and only by the repression by every individual of his individuality. What a contrast to our Protestant ideal, where personality is everything, and all that is done emanates from the will of the child of God, viewed as a unity; where the more natural a thing is, the better it is; the earthly vocation is the sphere where sonship to God is experienced and acquired; it is here we have the material for the experiencing of the love of God; here we have the high school of trust in God and of prayer, of love to our neighbours, self-discipline and victory over the world. How the different ideas of sin as what is contrary to our destiny correspond exactly to the different ways of regarding our destiny, will be shown in the doctrine of sin, but is quite easily understood even at this early stage of our discussion.

Apologetical

The doctrine of the nature of man, that is of his destiny to be a child of God in the Kingdom of God, ordinarily has combined with it a series of apologetical investigations which seek to establish it. They have, however, not infrequently the opposite effect, because they do not always keep within the limits drawn by the actual interests of faith. Our task is the same as it was in the parallel investigations in the doctrine of the world generally. We have two things to show. The first is that so far as the questions referred to are really of significance for faith, they have been already decided in our

main thesis; and with the proof of this, it is easy to combine the proper Apologetic matter which is required in the present section. So far as they go beyond that thesis, they have no significance for faith, but damage its certainty because they obtrude illegitimately into the province of knowledge. Following our plan we have to deal partly with questions which concern the nature of man, partly with such as relate to the beginnings of human history.

Under the FORMER heading the first place belongs to the question of the distinction between *the brute creation and man.* Its religious significance is as clear as that it finds no answer which goes essentially beyond our main thesis. The well-known judgment of childhood that the animals cannot pray, touches the decisive point, and that is just what we have already spoken of, man's destiny to be a child of God. This includes as a presupposition his capacity for personality, the "bent towards the unconditioned in all departments of the mental life" (Lotze), the craving of the inner life for unity and freedom (pp. 61 ff., 167 ff.). The most fruitful starting-point for the empirical investigation of this superiority, is man's possession of speech. The controversy on the other hand as to the presence or absence of intelligence in the animal world, is often conducted in an unintelligent way; while that regarding reason and intelligence first demands more precise demarcation of the concepts in order to be at all clear, and is in any case without significance for Dogmatics.

Faith is thoroughly indifferent to many *views regarding the fundamental elements of man's being, and their relation to each other,* so far as they are not contrary to the destiny affirmed of him, that he is called to be a child of God. The popular twofold division into body and soul prevails in the main in Scripture itself; and

then in the Western Church and the Churches of the Reformation. The threefold division into spirit, soul, and body goes back to Plato, appears in individual statements of the New Testament such as 1 Thessalonians v. 23 (Rom. VIII. 16 ?), and is the usual one in the Eastern Church. Neither of them is Christian in preference to the other: for example the former does not at all endanger the Christian hope of a future life, while the latter in no way strengthens it. If both propositions are still asserted among us, it shows an inaccurate understanding of psychology or of the Christian faith, or generally speaking of both subjects. Like these early traditional theories as to the fundamental elements of human nature, the theories of ancient or modern times regarding their relation to each other, are in themselves neither Christian nor unchristian. This applies to the theory of the interaction between body and soul, or of psycho-physical parallelism; unless the latter for example, understood as metaphysical truth, is interpreted in a sense contrary to that degree of independence on the part of the spiritual life, without which communion with God cannot be consistently regarded as personal in the strict sense, or as surviving this earthly mode of existence. But our judgment that there is no anthropology or psychology in itself Christian, holds good likewise of what is called "Biblical Psychology". For the accurate understanding of Scripture, accurate knowledge of its psychological vocabulary is naturally indispensable. Religious affirmations of the utmost importance remain a sealed book for the man who is unaware that, among the Hebrews, the "heart" is regarded as the central organ of the inner life of thought, as well as of volition and feeling. Indeed it is possible and necessary to go further. Here and there, such Biblical Psychology directs attention to

significant facts of the inner life, which that current among us readily overlooks, for example the close connexion of our thought with the will. How pertinent e.g. is the statement, "With the heart man believeth" (Rom. x. 9)! To have emphasized this is the service of many friends of Biblical Psychology (Roos, Beck, Delitzsch). But it is impossible on this account to declare Biblical Psychology authoritative in its individual statements. For one thing, there is not as a matter of fact any consistent psychological system in Scripture, but such must first be artificially imposed upon it. For another, many of its separate statements could not be maintained alongside of our present knowledge, without discarding our better insight into such subjects.

As regards the special question of *the origin of the individual soul*, the Ancient Church rejected the idea that it existed before its union with the earthly body (Pre-existence), for the reason that the theory seemed to undervalue this union, failing to recognize it with sufficient explicitness as God's good appointment. But this objection is perhaps unnecessary, and in order to explain the origin of sin, the idea has found no mean supporters down to our day; though manifestly they are moving in the region of philosophical speculation, and no longer in that of Dogmatics proper. With regard to the two other most widely diffused theories, no authoritative decision was pronounced. Some preferred what is called Creationism, referring the soul to an immediate creative act on the part of God; which is the general opinion of the Roman Church and of Reformed Theologians. Others were in favour of Traducianism; that is, they supposed body and soul to spring together from the parents, the relation being like that of the layer to the vine. Such—with the doctrine of original sin in view—was the

opinion of the Lutheran Dogmatists, along with Tertullian. Consideration of the facts, the wonderful combination of what is derived by heredity and what is individual, points us beyond both theories, even if no clear idea can be reached. In any case there is no decision in the name of faith, except that our leading principle of the destiny of man must not be obscured. But in so far as the problem of the relation of the Divine activity to the course of the universe always stands in the background, alongside of the questions which have hitherto occupied us, we are thus brought at the same time to the other series of questions which relate to the ORIGINS OF MANKIND.

In this connexion, immediate significance for our faith belongs least to the question in regard to which it is most frequently assumed, namely whether man was created out of *material already organized*, in dependence on other highly developed organisms, or out of unorganized material. The question must be put in those terms: for the Christian his "creation" is axiomatic. This is true not only in the sense, that man like everything else owes his existence generally to God, but also in the sense that a special Divine intention is creatively realized in him, that namely which according to the Christian faith is the highest of all: he is the object of the Divine love, a nature called to be a child of God's, for which (see above) the necessary presupposition is the capacity for personality. Hence too the statement that there is a dispute about the origin of man, is erroneous unless fuller particulars are given. The alternative applies solely and exclusively to the method of the Divine creative activity,—not to the why and wherefore, the ground and purpose. The fact itself is as little altered by the one assumption as to the method, namely from previously organized material, as is the joyful assurance,

"I believe that God has created me," by reference to father and mother. The distinction is not a fundamental one. In the one case we accept our life from the hand of God, although its mediation to us by our parents is beyond question, and is admitted up to a certain point. In the other, we collect painstakingly the facts of a dark past which are difficult to reach, we seek to understand them by the help of analogous facts often ambiguous, and by means of inferences to determine the greater or less degree of probability of the one or the other hypothesis with regard to the method in question. It might be expected accordingly that the question of the origin of man, thus narrowly confined, would be discussed with all impartiality. Indeed in the case of generation, the experience of which we ourselves share, it might appear more difficult for us to reverence in faith the Divine activity, because an ingrained habit tempts us to push the thought of God further away from us, in the case of a process which, looked at from one side, we understand somewhat better, or think that we do. In truth the method of the Divine creative activity (not only in reference to this occurrence, but generally in reference to every occurrence), is always in the last resort a mystery alike impenetrable, however we may regard our present alternative. Why is there, notwithstanding all this, so much impassioned controversy regarding the first man, with reference to the manner of his appearance, even where the mystery of our own origin which comes nearer us is scarcely ever mentioned? The explanation is to be found partly in the appeal to the individual Biblical statement in its isolation, which on this subject is made even by those who are far from holding all the other individual statements in Genesis; partly in the undeniably frivolous joy with which many turn the thesis,

in itself certainly not unchristian, that God called the first man into being in dependence on what was already highly organized animal life, into a strange dogma of the descent of our race from the ape, and thus naturally drive their opponents to an external reliance upon the letter of the Bible. These Dogmatists, professing to be scientific investigators, fail to recognize the all-important distinction between the theory of evolution generally and the naturalistic theory of evolution. Only the latter, in its exclusion of our doctrine of the purpose and ground of all that happens in the world, stands in fundamental opposition to the Christian faith in God, as we have already seen. Dogmatics is concerned exclusively with this determinative idea. But it cannot be settled by any natural science, but only by the concatenation of ultimate convictions, the grounds of which have been discussed in Apologetics. Consequently it is unnecessary for Dogmatics, and for that very reason dangerous, to pass its judgment upon the conflicts of natural science. However joyfully it may view the fact that the idea of the theory of development as fundamentally opposed to design, and also the overestimate of it generally, as if it were a solution of the mystery of the universe, have broken down, it has no reason to welcome an ill-defined intrusion of the idea of design into the exact investigation of nature (as for example in many forms of Neovitalism). Dogmatics both should and can know its independence, alike of the individual "discoveries," and the hasty interpretations of them. It is more mindful of its task when, instead of haggling about supposed gains or losses on its side, it helps to make every new insight, really gained and not merely asserted to be gained, into the development of the earth and its inhabitants, become a new hymn of praise to the eternal God. Faith hears as if from afar something of

these new tones of the never-ending hymn of the depth and the riches of the all-powerful wisdom of God (Rom. xi. 33 ff.). History will be our teacher here. The Church once vehemently opposed Copernicus; it is long since she acknowledged him. Is she to behave in the same way in reference to the theory of development, and then to "come to terms" with it, according to the taunts of her opponents? It is always a mistake if the Church "comes to terms" only upon compulsion, instead of appropriating for her own use, in the freedom of faith, all that is true, and understanding it in the light of eternal truth. Certainly this attitude is often made bitterly hard for her by the way in which a single truth is deified by its adherents. But there is as little "of faith" (Rom. xiv. 23), to which all things belong (1 Cor. iii. 22), in the appearance even of laziness in the province of knowledge, as there is in any other.

There is but one thing that this faith of ours can never surrender, namely the fundamental thought which we have again and again emphasized, that all things are of God and unto God, and that man is destined and fitted to become a child of God. To be sure, in its application to our particular question of the appearance of the first man, this fundamental thought calls once again for a special qualification. Why do so many refuse to be content with it in its general form? Why would they decide the manner of man's appearance, in the name of faith, if they could? Manifestly because the more it is a question of God's relation not to the world in general, but in our section to man in particular, the more urgent becomes the one side of the fundamental truth, namely the relative independence, and homogeneousness of the world in relation to God; in other words, the problem of living communion between God and man. Now the doctrine of Providence is the proper place where an

accurate treatment of this problem becomes indispensable. But though unexpressed, it dominates the situation, as soon as there is any express reference to man at all, and becomes specially acute, when our imagination involuntarily comes to be held fast at the thought of the first man. Consequently it had to be mentioned here.

What was last said applies still more in reference to two special questions concerning the first man, *the place in the scale of civilization* occupied by mankind *on their first appearance*, and *the common descent*. Indeed, on considering the matter more carefully, we must give it as our opinion that they have more immediately religious interest. But it is also plain that they can be accurately set and answered only in connexion with the doctrine of sin. For the position already within our reach, apart from the doctrine of sin, that the beginnings must be such that progress to the goal is possible, is as indisputable as it is worthless, if nothing further can be said regarding the nature of the way, whether it can be a straight line. Apart from sin, it is even less possible to make a more definite affirmation upon the second point than the one which is again obvious, that the unity of humanity as destined for salvation consists just in its capacity to reach this goal; which leaves it altogether an open question whether the empirical starting-point likewise, is one and the same for the whole human race.

We have already repeatedly been invited to look beyond the world of our mundane experience, as we realized the position of our faith, that all things are for God and of God who is Love, and that we are destined for sonship in the Kingdom of this God. But hitherto we have done it in the sense that, speaking quite

generally, the Kingdom of God, as we men are called thereunto, is not bounded by the conditions of our earthly existence; and as a consequence that as regards its compass it must not be confined in any way to us men. These ideas, especially the latter, receive a more definite form in the traditional doctrine of THE ANGELS, but also, as thus elaborated, excite obvious objections which do not apply to that latter idea itself. Quite apart from such objections in the first instance, the doctrine is at all events of great *methodological* importance. It shows in a specially simple and clear way the stages traversed by the history of the separate Christian doctrines generally. This history is specially instructive in the case of the doctrine of Angels, because according to the general conviction of Christendom, the matter here in question does not possess the same high personal significance for our standing as Christians, which belongs to others, as for instance Christology or the doctrine of the atonement. Consequently many are more willing to recognize and learn from the stages of the development in the one case, than they may be in the other, the lesson of how indispensable is our supreme principle of Revelation, as the ground and norm of all doctrines; and how indispensable, in the interests of the certainty and the clearness of the faith, is its application without reserve. The main points which we can always establish in the course of the Dogmatic development are the following. In the first place an infringing upon that supreme principle, and an apparent transcending of it as regards the degree of certainty and the content of religious knowledge, through an alliance with the prevailing contemporary philosophy, which in the orthodox period is regarded as purely in the interests of the gospel. Then criticism of the Dogma which had thus arisen, when the materials and instruments employed in the construction of it were no

longer generally acknowledged, or as a result of their being developed in their proper consequences, in this instance in a sense unfavourable to the Dogma; the result being a change in the significance and the dissolution of the traditional belief. This takes place in the age of Rationalism and of the modern consciousness. Finally when the mere restoration of the old which is at first attempted proves impossible, there is a fresh appeal to revelation itself, with an exact use of the primary sources, based upon an understanding of them as a whole facilitated by history, and with a careful application of the principles which we accept regarding faith and knowledge.

With our old Dogmatic theologians, the doctrine of the Angels used to be a favourite subject of theological speculation. Their nature was precisely defined, they are pure spirits. As regards their estate, there are some that have continued good and others that are fallen, evil: as regards their rank they are divided into a Heavenly Hierarchy. Their office was to praise God in Heaven and to serve Him on earth: this was spoken of not only in Dogmatic Theology, but also in morning and evening hymns. Their glory is detailed especially in opposition to the Catholic worship of Angels. The attack, which is at all events partly intelligible on the ground that this Dogmatic system encroaches where there is no basis in faith itself, is in essence fourfold. There was a search for the actual or supposed contradictions of the doctrine of the angels, which did without doubt go beyond the finely traced limits of what faith in the Revelation of salvation is capable of experiencing and knowing; when, for example, it spoke of their nature, or perhaps of their relation to space or to material corporeality, as if dealing with an instance of universally valid knowledge concerning the things of this world. As

against such supposed knowledge, a moderate amount of actual knowledge of the world was sufficient to turn it into ridicule as self-contradictory. A still greater impression was made by referring to the historical connexions of the belief as to angels with Persian or other oriental ideas, or going still farther back, to the possible psychological roots. Might it not have arisen out of a naïve materialization of religious experiences, the realization of the Divine help or of the mysterious conflict between powers of light and darkness, of good and evil in ourselves? Or out of the disposition of our reason to postulate that there is yet more spirit in the universe than our mundane experience knows? In short, it was believed that it could be shown how the belief in angels had arisen. Further the attempt was made to show that the needs which give rise to it are satisfied better and more consistently in other ways: the psychic workings in us by a more accurate psychology, the demand for more spirit in the universe by peopling the stars with spiritual beings, though they are unknown to us. Inconsistent, explicable on grounds of history and psychology, worthless in a religious point of view—the conclusion from such premises is plain: absolute rejection. For a change to some speculations foreign to the faith, is for it the same thing as denial. This is what takes place when Swedenborg makes the angels human souls developing in the future life, or when with Fechner they become natural powers, or even when they are fitted by modern Spiritism into its "scientific" experiments. But should there be the desire simply to revive the doctrine of angels of our Divines, in spite of these attacks, the same process of dissolution would at once necessarily begin anew, because the elements of dissolution are contained in itself. Nor do we gain any sure resting ground even from the standpoint of religious

experience. For the upholders of this view themselves do not venture to assert that belief in angels is an object of religious experience, in the same sense as sin and grace; otherwise they would have to regard appearances of angels as necessary for Christians. We are thus, as was maintained at the start, brought back to the question whether and how far *the Revelation of God in Christ*, as the source and norm of religious knowledge, renders possible affirmations of faith regarding the angelic world.

For the relation of the Old Testament statements to those of the New Testament, and that of the latter to each other, reference may be made to principles already laid down (pp. 294 ff., 379). As regards the New Testament, it is obvious that less importance attaches to the presence of angels in narratives about Jesus, than to His own statements regarding the angels; because in the former, we have always to take into consideration the possibility of legendary embellishment. Compared with the Jewish angelology as with that of our old Dogmatic Theology, these show great reserve as regards their nature, estate, and ranks, and confine themselves to their service. They worship God in the Heavenly realm where His Glory is manifested, and stand in readiness for His service on earth. But by far the most important point is that Jesus brings the Old Testament idea of angels surrounding the throne of Jahveh with hymns of praise and in readiness for service, into relation with Himself the Son, now, but especially on His return. They are the angels of His Father; He could ask the Father for their help; He appears with the angels of His might (Mt. xviii. 10, xxvi. 53, xiii. 49, xxv. 31, John i. 51). And as they serve Him the Son, so do they His, the sons, through Him (cf. Luke xvi. 22, Mt. xviii. 10). In both relations, the Church includes itself in its state-

ments regarding the angels. Its Lord is the Lord of the angels, and they serve it as well as Him (Heb. I. 5, 1 Pet. III. 22, Parall. and Heb. I. 14, 1 Cor. XI. 10).

This state of matters does not permit us to regard belief in angels as a part of the consciousness of Jesus which is taken over in a merely external fashion. As we saw, He makes a special application of it on the basis of His belief in Himself as the Son. At the same time it is impossible to show on the other hand that it is inseparably connected with the inmost core of this self-consciousness of His, that the latter would be essentially altered, if we were to depart from the idea. We may thus on the one hand affirm that belief in angels is not a necessary constituent of the Christian doctrinal system; and accordingly we must not make any use of it for the establishment of saving faith. That would be a positive transgression of Jesus' rule (Luke XVI. 31), which in spirit goes further than the obvious meaning of the words and applies here too. On the other hand, seeing that the belief in angels receives at least a particular application at the hands of Jesus, the proper thing is not to ignore it altogether in Dogmatics, but to say that our personal attitude to it depends upon the limits within which we recognize the religious authority of Jesus; whether we do this even in matters which are not inseparably connected with the kernel of His gospel, which always is the inner sanctuary of His personal relation to the Father and to us. On this subject individual Christians have held very different opinions in different ages, and it has often been those who sincerely accepted the word of Jesus on the point that have declared most plainly, how far they were from wishing to make belief in angels the test of a specially strong faith. The better they know what faith is, the further from their minds is such a standard of it according to the sum of its points, in a word the

strange idea that one could believe *on* angels instead of *in their existence*. Further such adherents of the belief in angels are well aware that individual opinions in this province must be in a special degree inadequate.

With such reservations, however, they must be left free to treasure their belief in angels as a living confirmation of truths which cannot be taken from them, but are altogether independent of this confirmation. There are two of them, a primary one and a derived. God's creative activity does not exhaust itself within the limits of the world of space and time knowable by us, and even in those exercises of it which are still hidden from us serves the supreme purpose of the Divine Love, the Kingdom of God in Christ. This Kingdom is a reality even apart from its earthly realization, though a reality bound up with its earthly realization (1 Peter I. 12; Eph. III. 10); and as perfected, it will transcend all our present comprehension, and fulfil all the highest ideals, not only of the good and true, but also of the beautiful. As a protection against either an overestimate or an underestimate of the world disclosed to our earthly intelligence, this line of thought is so immediately related to the fundamental idea of our faith, as to be completely independent of the attitude of the individual to belief in angels. But those who share that belief will see in it a welcome expression therefor. Within this fundamental idea of the Divine Glory—the word by which Scripture sums up all those relations of which we have spoken—the special idea of a demonstration of the Divine Help by means still unknown to us, has its relative right, and may even be kept free from everything that is fantastic. For example, the visionary character of the appearances of angels, which applies both to many of the Biblical statements and to the stories from the lives of religious persons, worthy perhaps of serious con-

sideration in other respects, is intelligible from the nature of faith. More power to convince would again be contrary to Luke xvi. 31.

God's World in Contradiction to the Divine Love (Sin)

Faith in the Revelation of the love of God in Christ assures the Christian Church that the world has its purpose and source in God, that it is for God and from God; and in this knowledge which faith possesses, it understands as much of the nature of the world as it needs to know in the interests of faith. But the world of which hitherto we have been speaking is not the world in the whole of its reality, as given to Christian faith. In order to get quite a clear idea of some indispensable fundamental conceptions, we left out of consideration, to begin with, the fact that this world is a sinful world—a world in opposition to the love of God. The Christian knows it as such, but believes notwithstanding, indeed just on that account, that it is God's world. Christian Faith is essentially faith in the sin-forgiving love of God—the Kingdom of God is a Kingdom for redeemed sinners (pp. 84 ff.). There is no exposition of the distinctively Christian faith, unless this is clearly realized. But in this content of the Christian faith, God's love to the world and the world's opposition to the love of God, we have a fact so enigmatic that only the full reality of the revelation of this love makes it intelligible to us, inasmuch as this is the actual solution of the opposition in question to the love of God by the love of God. Otherwise we naturally minimize the seriousness of sin, or we do not conceive the love of God as what it really is: sin and the love of God become elements of natural necessity. We may certainly develop the thought which results directly from our

immediate context: if man's destiny cannot be realized along the pathway of necessary Omnipotence, the twofold possibility confronts us—either a direct pathway to the goal, or a crooked and winding one. But it is a chilling thought, in presence of the enormous power of sin and the all-subduing love of God. But for the fact that sin is subdued by the love of God, its power remains the obstacle that cannot be got over, in the way of the faith, that the world is the world of our God—the world of eternal love; and without experience of the power of sin, there is for us no full experience of the love of God,—both statements being made in the sense of the proposition just mentioned, that otherwise sin and the love of God become elements of natural necessity. The bearing of this conclusion may gradually become clear to us, in the course of our exposition of the subject of sin, but it can be fully shown only when we deal with the question of its origin.

It is for this reason that doctrinal statements regarding sin call for special carefulness. Like all doctrinal statements they are altogether dependent upon revelation as producing faith; but here again we must pay particular attention to this supreme *rule as to method.* Religious experience when separated ever so little from revelation, its sure ground and unvarying norm, incurs the gravest danger of error. The very fact of our personal interest in the judgment of sin causes us to vacillate all too readily between an overestimate and an underestimate of it. Though the latter inclination is much stronger, it punishes itself by passing to the other extreme, and turning up in the guise of a seeming overestimate which is in reality only another form of underestimate. Moreover, if without knowing it, we lose hold of the norm of revelation, subjective experience, which is supposed to be so certain, is influenced by other

objective standards of Non-Christian or Anti-Christian theories of the universe, in our day especially by certain unproved assumptions of the modern theory of the universe, which dominate ordinary opinion. This makes the full and free acceptance of the Christian fundamental ideas regarding sin exceedingly difficult. Suspicion is cast upon the deeply solemn word *sin*, as if there were simply imperfection, while in the next instant a change takes place apparently to hopeless pessimism: responsible freedom of the will is laughed at, and alongside of this the power of the human will is exaggerated *ad infinitum*.

The Reformers were fully alive to this urgent necessity of taking their stand upon revelation in their doctrine of sin, and it was to this principle that they owed their more profound flashes of insight into the nature of sin. As the champions of the full recognition of the grace that is in Christ, they were necessarily at the same time the champions likewise of the full recognition of sin. Such too is the meaning of their statements regarding the Divine image (pp. 390 ff.). Man's destiny, what is inconsistent with it, and the realization of it through Christ in us, are all exactly of a piece. It is because the Divine image, in the full and deep sense, belongs to the nature of man, and is not in any way an added gift of grace, that sin is "so deep and dark" (Smalk. Art. III, 1); not a regrettable stain, which, however, leaves the inmost being untouched, but a perversion of our nature, a denial of our destiny. But it can be so spoken of, only when like the Reformers we recognize that sin is something personal, an affair involving the personality, and not a matter of separate evil deeds. Luther is always inculcating by his favourite quotation from Matthew vii. 16 ff., that it is because the tree is not good that the fruits are not good. That

again he can say, because he knows, also by the testimony of revelation, what sin is as regards its content; namely want of faith, not fearing or loving or trusting God. It is not primarily domination by the natural impulses; this is sin because of the lack of faith, the right relation towards God.

But such new principles of the Reformation, which were even there bound up with the old doctrine, fell short of being developed in an effective way, in proportion as they were set within the traditional framework of the doctrine of sin, in the writings of our old Dogmatic theologians. Indeed the new served in part to make the old still more unsatisfactory and inconsistent. A main error was that the confusion of which we spoke between the question of God's image in man and that of the condition of the first man, actually dominated the doctrine of sin. After very general observations regarding sin in its main scope, the exposition hurried on to the Fall and its results, to original sin in the two senses in which the term was then used, according to which it is the first sin of the first man as the source of the sin of the whole race, and the sinfulness of the race in so far as there involved. This was followed, it is true, by a more detailed section on actual sins, but without any clear connexion with the foregoing, or with the next and closing section on the servitude of the will. Attention was thus immediately withdrawn from what lies nearest all of us, the nature of our sin, to what is most remote, the origin of sin in general, a fault from which public instruction and even preaching still largely suffer. I do not mean that the question of the origin could and might be left alone. But in any case, so far as it admits of an answer at all, it can be answered only when we have exact knowledge of the nature of sin. Otherwise we may possibly establish the origin of some-

thing quite different from what is presupposed, something, therefore, in which we have no interest; and more than that, for we thereby in turn prejudice accurate determination of what lies nearest us. This was undoubtedly the case in our old Protestant Dogmatic Theology. It was precisely the new light upon the nature of sin brought by the Reformation, which was obscured by the all-dominating doctrine of its origin. That emphasizing of the personal character of sin which accompanied the insight into its nature as want of faith, could not come to its own, as long as all sin was regarded essentially only from the point of view of something inherited. When further this heritage was explained without more ado as a heritage of guilt, in order that it might be at the same time a personal possession, we had an exaggeration against which it was the Christian conscience itself that rose in protest. Moreover, if all sin has its basis in the first sin, no proper account is taken of the immeasurable distinctions found among sinful men, while again the question of personal sin can no longer arise. By both exaggerations, however, though they were supposed to show how diametrically opposed sin is to the nature of man, it is in actual fact robbed of the seriousness which belongs only to the truth in its fullness. Nor is this mischief made good by the circumstance that the doctrine in question really gave a vivid representation of the enormous power of solidarity possessed by sins and sinners. For since this was brought about at the cost of truth, even this most serious aspect of the doctrine was involved in the danger of not being taken quite seriously. In this connexion it is natural to pass judgment incidentally upon the much canvassed position that the Divine image was lost in consequence of the fall of the first man. Perfectly right as regards its in-

tention, a vivid expression for the strict judgment upon sin, and intelligible as complementary to its presupposition of the natural perfection of the first man, it yet necessarily involves a contradiction in thought. For if the Divine Image denotes the destiny of man and the capacity which he possesses therefor, there is certainly opposition to this destiny in a perverted direction of the will, and thus there is abuse of the capacity, but not forfeiture of the destiny and the corresponding capacity. At least this is so as long as man is regarded as being capable of redemption ; consequently the doctrine we are now considering had to pay the penalty in connexion with that of regeneration. Moreover, it is contrary to the express words of Scripture, where it is presupposed in the New Testament as well as the Old (Gen. IX. 6, James III. 9, 1 Cor. XI. 7), as something obvious that even sinful mankind is possessed of the image of God.

Though these preliminary observations expressly emphasize the fact that, and the reason why, our supreme methodological principle that all doctrinal statements have their basis in revelation is specially necessary in the doctrine of sin, it appears worth while nevertheless to direct attention explicitly to the truth which is there implied, that the doctrinal statements having this basis naturally hold good only in the sphere of such revelation—only for faith in it. This is indeed, rightly understood, only the other side of the same truth. If Christian faith is concerned solely with the positions thus reached, then certainly it is only Christian faith that is concerned with them. There is sin in every religion. But in every religion it must be determined what sin is according to the revelation there believed in. Were we to disregard this point, we should of necessity come to a wrong judgment with reference

both to the evil and the good in other religions, which would again in the long run lead to distorted judgments in regard to our own religion. Then even from within Christianity, the Christian ideas of sin readily appear punctilious and overstrict, as well as frivolous and indefinite, if their manifest connexion with their sure basis and clear standard is not kept distinctly in view. For example, the ever-recurring objection that Christianity has tolerated slavery, fails to observe that it is only gradually that even the Christian principle can prevail in every separate ramification. It is the same in the sphere of the individual life. For example, the guilt remitted in forgiveness cannot be truly appreciated in its depths, where nothing is yet known of forgiveness. In that case, on the contrary, the greatest thing in the world, guilt and forgiveness, becomes something poor and artificial. Only too frequently Christianity suffers by such want of clearness on the part of its adherents.

We have still to recall in closing what we said before about the nature of religious knowledge—*that it is a* REVELATION *which faith has to interpret, and it is* FAITH *which has to interpret the revelation.* The doctrine of sin may be set forth in a falsely "objective" fashion, unconnected with religious experience, and in that way the doctrine is broken up. We have thus then vindicated our *arrangement of the material* belonging to the doctrine of sin, the strict separation of our two sections on the nature of sin and its origin, and the order in which we take them. The former deals with the

Nature of Sin

Here we have first of all to put the *separate questions* as simply as possible. Common speech with increasing precision confines the word sin to the religious sphere. Where it is still otherwise used, a measure of

emphasis and solemnity clings to it, from the usage which is alone properly speaking correct. What is evil, regarded in the religious point of view, is sin. Now evil is what is contrary to an unconditional law ; sin therefore is what is contrary to the unconditional law of the Divine Will (1 John III. 4),—to the unconditionally valuable, which thought identifies with the unconditionally real. By this in its most obvious meaning it is emphasized that this opposition to the will of God separates from God, alienates from Him (cf. Is. LIX. 2). More precisely the opposition is not, in the first instance, to be characterized as one that affects the direction of the character and life, but rather as an opposition of the will, of the particular expression and particular act of the will, and of the direction of the will, and of the social order resulting from human conduct. To begin with, opposition of the will in general is sufficient, the more precise qualification being reserved. The Divine will, however, with which the human will comes into opposition, is for us Christians the will of God revealed in Christ, with the content of which we have just acquainted ourselves in the doctrine of the Divine Image, of man's destiny upon the basis of the self-revelation of the love of God. In this connexion, while we have strictly to maintain the principle that ideas regarding sin which belong to the stage of the preparatory revelation, are not combined with the distinctively Christian ideas without being tested, at the same time we may emphatically affirm the incomparable importance which, on this presupposition, belongs to the Old Testament statements. Indeed the History of Israel is, in its deepest foundations, a Divine education in the knowledge of sin by means of the Law (Gal. III. 24). Consequently no other religion is so rich in significant terms for the finest distinctions and mutual relations in the King-

dom of sin, the enormous breadth and depth of which are surpassed only by those of the Kingdom of God in Christ.

If sin is opposition of the will to the Will of God, we have now only to emphasize separately the constituent elements of this preliminary definition, in order to find a simple division for our discussion of the nature of sin. When in speaking of the opposition of the will to the Will of God, we place the emphasis upon the *Will of God, the content* of the sinful volition comes manifestly before us; when we place it upon *the opposition of the will* we learn *the form* of the sinful volition in the most manifold relations. Under this head the following are certainly the most important points. The numerous gradations of opposition on the part of the will, considered with reference to the strength of it, bring us to the relation of sin and guilt. We next remark that the opposition of the will has to be considered under the point of view of individual acts of volition, as well as of the direction of the will. What is the intensity of the opposition generally, without prejudice to the different degrees of which we have already spoken? But further it is by no means a question simply of the individual sinful will; on the contrary, all that has been said regarding it becomes fully intelligible, only when we consider the interaction of evil wills in the kingdom of sin. Finally these observations naturally conclude with a word upon the universality of sin. But first of all, before sin can be considered according to its content, as what is contrary to the commandment of God, and before the separate questions mentioned regarding its nature, as opposition on the part of the will, can be answered, it is necessary to remind ourselves *how ambiguously individual concepts which come from tradition* are understood, and how in consequence they cause confusion by their ambiguity.

The word *selfishness* frequently means the opposite of love of one's neighbours, sin, therefore, according to the one aspect of its content (alongside of godlessness, and want of self-discipline). But it also denotes quite generally the essence of all sin in point of form, thinking of oneself, self-love, self-seeking, self-will, without which indeed we could not think of an opposition to the Will of God at all. The word *passion* denotes frequently the opposite of self-discipline, the mastery over our natural impulses ; and this, corresponding to the meaning of the word selfishness which was first mentioned above, is again an aspect of sin according to its content, though a different aspect from that above ; being want of discipline as distinguished from godlessness and want of love. However, it often refers to the whole of our natural impulses, under the point of view of the weakness which they indicate, which is again one side of the essence of sin in a formal point of view, corresponding to the meaning of the word selfishness which was mentioned above in the second place. It will be manifest how the second meaning of the words is always automatically running into the question of the origin of sin, and is consequently quite frequently employed for the answering of it. To a certain extent the most varied meanings of the words we have hitherto been considering, selfishness and passion, are combined in the biblical word *Flesh*, especially in the Pauline and Johannine usage. *Flesh* there denotes by no means selfishness only, or passion only, as is shown by a short comparison of the passages, but both of them, and alienation from God besides. Quite as varied is the use of it with reference to the essence of sin in a formal point of view. In this reference also, note must be taken of almost all the points of view of which we have spoken, in order to exhaust what is meant by the word *flesh* in each individual instance. The word does

not exclude but includes the sinfulness of our nature as well as the expressions of it, the depth of the corruption in the individual and the extension of it in the race, even the idea of guilt. As sin is thus in all the aspects of its content and its distinctive form denoted by the term *flesh*, which primarily means nothing more than animate matter, it is easily intelligible that many should see in this natural property of man the root also of his sinfulness. Whether this is legitimate we cannot discuss till we are dealing with the origin of sin.

These observations upon the terminology contain an answer, though in the first instance only a negative one, to that first question of

The Essence of Sin According to its Content

They make it antecedently improbable that the definition is correct which finds the essence in *selfishness* or *passion*, if the words, as was shown above, are meant to express the essence according to its content, want of love and want of self-discipline. Both words are too narrow. Passion is too narrow for the very acme of sin. What is called diabolical wickedness is much more deliberate want of love than it is want of self-discipline, while on the other hand, all sin is not essentially want of love. Should we simply combine the two and say that in passion there is always at the same time selfishness, while in selfishness there is always also a moment of passion, the one specially manifest in the child, the other in the reckless world-conqueror, the definition would still be incomplete, for in any case a perverted relation to God is also sin. That sin is *love of the world* is likewise inaccurate; it infringes upon what was correct in the definitions we have discussed. Only this definition rightly calls attention to an aspect of the matter, which they have not taken into consideration. In dealing with

the destiny of man we had, as a matter of fact, to keep in view his relation not only to God, to his neighbour, and to his own nature, but also to the world.

The rejection of these definitions which are only partly correct now leads naturally to the *correct* one. The relations we have named, when synthesized, constitute the essence of sin according to its content, and we already know the synthesis of them, namely from the doctrine of the divine image, man's destiny to be a child of God in the Kingdom of God. Of this, love to our neighbours, self-discipline, and dominion over the world were essential parts, but the point that unified them all was the right relation to God. Now it is as certain as that in every religion sin can be understood only as what is contrary to the good acknowledged in it, to the Will of God revealed in it, that for us Christians the inmost essence of sin consists in its being the perversion of the normal relation to God, want of religion, opposition to the self-revealing love of God which excites and demands trust, "want of faith". All religion is fellowship, communion between God and man: but nowhere is this communion so profoundly personal and so profoundly ethical as in our religion, where we have fellowship on the part of the personal God of holy love with man who rises to personality by trusting in this same God. God is willing to enter into this communion, and His will of love makes it a question of whether man is willing to do so. The refusal to have such trust, to surrender oneself, to acknowledge God, the course of self-seeking, of resolving to live and die for self,—this is sin. It should be observed in these expressions how very closely the material and the formal definitions of the essence of sin are connected. "To assert oneself, as if one belonged to oneself," is sin in its profoundest quality. We did not make ourselves, either as regards the natural or the

moral and religious life ; we owe nothing to ourselves ; but when we do not allow this truth to have effect, when we lie to ourselves, saying "we stand by our own right," this is sin in us.

This Christian truth regarding sin is implicit, that is as a self-evident counterpart, in all the N. T. testimonies which tell us what is good, what is the will of God, in all the words of Jesus regarding the Kingdom, especially in all the beatitudes, as well as in the self-revelations of a Paul, which are summed up in a disclosure of the inmost convictions (Gal. II. 20). But this refusal to believe is also expressly represented as sin in its distinctive form. For example, Matthew XXIII. 37, "Ye would not" (let yourselves be won by me for the dominion of God), or John XVI. 9, "This is sin that they believe not". The characteristic sin of him who is the opposite of Christ, in whom the essence of sin appears in embodied form, the man of sin, is that he exalts himself against God (2 Thess. II. 3, 4). It was thus a rediscovery of the gospel when the Reformers recognized the sin of all sins in our being without the fear of God, without love to God or trust in Him (Augs. Conf. 2), in our even contemning, hating God in the inmost core of our hearts, in our doubting His grace, or, to use the favourite expression of the time, in our transgressing the commandments "of the first table". This does not mean that the sin of want of love, want of self-discipline, or finding our happiness in the world, was belittled. On the contrary ; but none of these are understood in all their depths till they are traced out to their primal source in the perverted relation to God. How much talk had there been in the Middle Ages of concupiscence, of evil lust, but upon the view that the natural impulses, especially the sexual impulse, and further the desire for gain and independence, were in themselves evil ! And how natural it had

then been to ease the conflict with actual sin, by means of these "painted sins!" Now it came to be a question of the heart, of pure love to God, and by a grand paradox the name concupiscence was now given to the perverted relation "even in the higher powers" (Apol. 1, 24), *the* sin par excellence, the want of faith of which we have spoken. For as faith (in its full evangelical sense of religious trust) gives the impulse and the power for love of our neighbours, and for free command of our own and external nature, so is want of faith (in the like deep sense) the root of selfish lovelessness, undisciplined gratification of the natural impulses, and surrender to the world—apparent dominion over it, but in reality being mastered by its seeming blessings. For the material presented to our wills remains the same. But the impression made by it is quite different according as the will in all its relations is guided and shaped by trust in God, or is made subject to the self that is alienated from God, and this godless self is the master.

This important truth will force itself upon every one, who is interested in a genuinely Christian view of the essence of sin, the more convincingly, the more a twofold misinterpretation of it is averted. *In the first place* it is not asserted that in *the consciousness* of the sinful man, irreligion must always stand in the foreground. That is by no means the case. On the contrary, he is conscious much rather of individual actions, or defects, telling of want of love or of self-discipline. For the most part he is not conscious of alienation from God, so long as it takes the form of indifference. And even if in any way the thought of God comes more clearly home to him, it often for a long time occasions merely a feeling of discomfort. Satisfaction with the world, and weariness of it, may alternately dominate the heart, throughout a long lifetime, without its becoming clear that the absence of God

is the cause of this hunger as well as of this apparent satisfaction, to say nothing of the realization of the enmity against God. Our statement therefore does not claim to describe an unvarying succession in the course of the conscious spiritual life, but to determine the inner relation of the moments in the concept of sin, as in its full clearness it becomes perfectly intelligible only to the Christian, who is in principle redeemed from sin, who, starting from his experience as a child of God, sees light upon its opposite, and certainly no longer doubts that this judgment of his corresponds to the objective fact. For as a matter of fact, into the empty place which should be filled by God, and from which as from a fixed centre the whole rich universe within and around us should be governed, there rush tumultuously and in confusion all the powers and temptations of this world, and under the guise of riches and freedom they establish their enslaving despotism. *In the second place* we also require here to estimate the observed fact, that the relation of the separate fundamental aspects of sin with each other is one of *action and reaction.* The person who does not trust comes to be without anchorage in reference to his own nature and the world, and without sympathy towards his neighbour ; while on the other hand every concession to the impulse of passion weakens the power of love and trust in God. This tragic concatenation again admits of endless variation in every single individual.

In conclusion, we must once again affirm the principle before adduced, that the distinctively Christian content of our definition naturally holds good only upon the foundation of the Christian revelation. So far as the understanding of it is subject to an historical development, the further definition of sin varies with this in the individual. But even under pre-Christian and extra-Christian conditions, as well as imperfectly Christian

ones within Christendom itself, the Christian judgment regarding it possesses its relative truth,—in each case according to the knowledge of God actually present, though imperfect. Thus Paul sees the fundamental sin of Heathendom in ingratitude, inasmuch as men did not suffer their knowledge of God, imperfect as it was, to assert its influence over their wills, and let a reverent recognition of God mature within them (Rom. 1. 21). Further the psychology of religion justifies him in maintaining that such lack of reverence and gratitude is always, however little in evidence, the ultimate source of all possible sins, wherever the powers of Christianity are not operative in their fullness. Think how in Modernism self-deification and self-depreciation are so often strangely conjoined. But we may once more remind ourselves at this point how indispensable, speaking generally, for an effective introduction of our Christian idea of the nature of sin into the mental life of the present, is an exact and sympathetic acquaintance with that mental life in its characteristic modern form. For example, it is instructive to consider what was said about the disturbance of the normal relation to God, to one's neighbour, to one's own nature, to the world, from the point of view which is adopted by large classes ; how it is a question there of a relation to superiors, equals and inferiors, and how in this regard, service and domination, dependence and freedom, are connected with each other in the most marked variety ; and in particular, perhaps, to observe in what kindred yet different forms Goethe's celebrated exposition of the three kinds of reverence—towards what is above, around, and under us—is presented.

The Essence of Sin according to its Form

Such is in principle the definition of the essence of sin according to its content. It is opposition of the will to

the Will of God. Much more complicated is the exposition of the other side of our definition, according to which sin is OPPOSITION OF THE WILL. There is here involved, first of all quite generally, a limitation of the assumption widely current that sin is essentially weakness of will, suffering, passiveness, a restriction upon life, not an exercise of life. Certainly it is restriction, suffering; but then above all it is regarded under a quite different point of view from here, namely when we are dealing not with its essence as here, but with its results. These are in fact summed up in the concept of evil, that is of restriction upon life. Next, so far as sin must be viewed as weakness, at our present stage, where we are inquiring as to its essence,—and of course it must —that view of it is entirely erroneous, unless the truth which is decisive has previously come to its own. We can express it in the first instance in the proposition, *imperfection and sin must not be confused.* It is not being conditioned by the natural impulses in itself that is sin, but willing to let ourselves be conditioned by them. The multiplicity of natural impulses is part of the equipment bestowed upon us. It is likewise part of it that this multiplicity of natural impulses is not arranged in an harmonious whole. Moreover, in our development the natural impulses spring up before the consciousness of our destiny, and consequently when this consciousness awakes, they cannot be made subject to it except by a determination of the will. Nor can we imagine such taking place without some kind of resistance, which means some kind of conflict—the necessary qualifications being reserved. But this equipment is understood by us as capacity to attain to our destiny. It is not sin, but a necessary means for our supreme end, our destiny, that by the act of our wills we should become one with the Will of God, children of God. For as we saw, when

dealing with the idea of the love of God and our being in the image of God, communion with God cannot be brought about like a natural process by creative omnipotence. Our equipment with the multiplicity of still unharmonized natural impulses is thus the necessary presupposition both for our becoming children of God and on that account for possible sin. Actual sin arises out of it when the will, instead of using them as a means to that end, yields itself to them as if their mastery were itself the end of our existence—when our will in opposition to the standard of the good, seeks itself; which necessarily means that it affirms that multiplicity of its impulses of which we spoke, its merely and distinctively natural form (on all its sides, see above). This truth stands out with remarkable distinctness in Genesis III., and is summed up with striking brevity in James I. 14. In the latter passage there is certainly the presupposition of the human will as already perverted. And now if, in the manner just described, sin is recognized as a contradiction by the will, the proposition which was set aside above, because there it was erroneous and then actually dangerous, becomes plain in its relative truth: sin is weakness of will, both the particular sin, and the whole perverse disposition. As submission to the natural impulses, it is of course powerlessness, weakness of will. But that it is in all seriousness a process of will, had to be brought out in advance as definitely and simply as possible. We sin with the will, said Augustine of old, one who was a finely qualified investigator of these deep recesses of our inward being; our *weakness* of will is an affair *of the will*,—so to say a false strength of will,—a matter of self-will, self-seeking, self-love. Perhaps this truth is still plainer, if it is expressly added that the phrase contradiction by the will is by no means meant only in the sense of conscious intention, of which we

have to speak immediately when we distinguish sin and guilt. The expression actual opposition of the will or actual contradiction in the will, likewise suffices here. Indeed all that would be admitted by every one as a fact of self-observation guided by the light of revelation, were it not for the circumstance, to which we have pointed from the beginning of the doctrine of sin onwards, that the question of the origin of sin obtrudes itself here also as a disturbing element. The question is at once raised whether and how far this actual contradiction by the will is an unavoidable reality. Thus in order to allow of such an examination of the facts of the case which are referred to as would not be prejudiced by this question, it may be remarked here that an explanation of them that might be found from one's own guilt, and especially from that of others, is still kept entirely in reserve, and that the unavoidableness alluded to is by no means already recognized as a necessity which is independent of that guilt.

The outcome of this investigation, then, is the statement with which we started : Sin and imperfection must not be confused.

This statement leads directly to another which is even more important, viz. : *Sin and guilt* must not be confused. The word *sin* denotes opposition on the part of the human will to the Divine, considered in relation to the Divine will as its objective norm. The word *guilt*, on the other hand, denotes opposition on the part of the human will considered in relation to the understanding of the objective norm which is subjectively present, and to the power subjectively present of complying with it. All qualifications are still reserved, especially the fact that a sin may involve guilt, although in the moment when it is committed there is perhaps neither the knowledge nor the power of will to avoid it ;

but there might have been but for incapacity due to previous guilt. This is what is meant when it is often said off-hand that sin is an objective, guilt a subjective concept. This distinction between sin and guilt would likewise be generally admitted, were it not for the premature intrusion here again of the problem of the freedom of the human will, which falls to be answered only when we are dealing with the question of the origin of sin. Here on the contrary we are dealing with the essence of sin as a fact capable of being experienced and tested by the standard of revelation, where this distinction of sin and guilt forces itself directly upon our notice; and it will be impossible to identify the two, in the sense that only that is called sin which was called here guilty sin (H. H. Wendt),—if the whole wealth of life is to be apprehended by means of clear conceptions.

In the traditional doctrine of the Church, the distinction between sin and guilt does not receive its full rights, any more than the distinction which we first treated between imperfection and sin. Indications of it are certainly not awanting, as for example, when it is said (2 Helvetic Confession, 8) that some sins are more grievous than others, where the predicate "more grievous" has reference not to the content of the norm violated, which also recognizes different degrees, as between injury to life and to property for example, but to differences in the measure of moral knowledge and power. But on the whole, for reasons which we shall understand with growing precision, the tendency predominates as far as possible to identify sin and guilt. A distinction is indeed drawn between sins of knowledge and deliberate purpose, or sins of malice on the one hand, and sins of ignorance and unpremeditated sins or sins of weakness on the other. But the distinction is nullified, because

generally speaking the individual actual sins are understood almost entirely as the outcome of sinfulness, which is looked upon as inherited and yet as involving guilt. When Rationalism did away with this presupposition of Orthodoxy, its place was taken by another method equally one-sided, namely the atomic treatment of individual sins, and the minimizing as far as possible of their guilty character.

On the other hand, the distinction between sin and guilt is everywhere presupposed by Jesus' treatment of the soul, which goes thoroughly into each individual case, and in a wonderful way combines strictness with gentleness. All certainly stand in need of His salvation, but not as if they were a uniform body; there are many degrees between the "poor in spirit," and those to whom His words, "Ye would not," apply. Of special importance for our question is the clear understanding of "sin of ignorance" in the New Testament. The term is far from comprehending simply what is so designated in the literature of devotion; it is used also of what are called gross and heinous sins, like the heathen vices (Eph. IV. 18), or the death of Jesus by the leaders of the people or the people themselves (Acts XIII. 27, cf. Luke XXIII. 34), or the persecution of the Church by Paul (1 Tim. I. 13). The last passage shows with special clearness that guilt, even of a serious nature, is in no way meant to be excluded by the expression. But this is only to make the distinction between sin and guilt, as well as between different degrees of guilt, so much the clearer. Ignorance in such passages is the opposite of deliberate opposition to the will of God, more accurately to the love of God fully revealing itself. In this Scriptural sense, sin of ignorance is possible till the supreme revelation of the Love of God is complete (till the coming of Christ; cf. what was said above re-

garding the heathen world), or, after it is complete, till it comes home in the fullness of its glory to the persons concerned. Here then sin of ignorance means the same as sin which is not deliberate, of the sinfulness of which we are not yet fully conscious, sin which, however much guilt it may involve, does not exclude the Divine forgiveness. Its opposite, deliberate rejection of salvation fully known, is called sin unto death (1 John v. 16) or wilful sin (Hebr. vi. 4 ff., x. 26 ff.), only that we must understand "wilful" here in its strictest sense as discussed above. The sin against the Holy Ghost (Mt. xii. 31 ff.) has the same meaning, when we go behind the immediate context to the root idea (cf. "Ethics").

There can be no doubt that this insistence of the New Testament upon the distinction between sin and guilt, and the many varying degrees of guilt, is fully borne out in education and pastoral work, as well as in one's criticism of one's self, while neglect of it brings its own punishment; but there are many subjects, especially that of collective sin, which fall to be discussed before we can speak of it definitely.

In the first place, it has to be noted that the opposition of the will, and that too in all the degrees of which we have spoken, may be an opposition IN INDIVIDUAL ACTS OF VOLITION, or in the DIRECTION OF THE WILL. Indeed this also is a distinction recognized by the traditional doctrine, but again without its being assigned its full importance. Actual sin is distinguished from habitual sin, and the actual sins are classified under all possible points of view, which naturally coincide in part with our last discussed distinction of sin and guilt, such as "intentional" and "unintentional," or "deadly" and "venial". Others again have reference to the content of the sin, as "against God, or our neighbours, or ourselves," or to some formal relation as "sins of the heart,

of the lips or of deed" ; while there are still others which have no serious value, being based upon the external use of individual Biblical passages, like "crying" sins and "not crying" ones. But generally speaking, there is no possibility of a clear recognition of individual sins, because, as we had occasion to point out in the other connexion with which we dealt, they are regarded essentially simply as manifestations of a sinful direction of the will, instances of sinfulness, that is, or of original sin in the one sense of this term, according to which it is meant to point not so much to the origin of sin, but on the contrary to the sinful state in which, as a matter of fact, we find ourselves in virtue of heredity. Now there undoubtedly are a great many sins, which are to be regarded simply as fruits of the corrupt tree (Mt. VII. 16 ff.); but if all actual sins whatsoever are construed merely in this way, there is to say the least no adequate explanation of how such a crop on the part of the tree is intelligible to any great extent, so far as we can observe, from the nature of the will, without immediately having to resort to the idea of an evil nature, which in any case itself calls for explanation: how is it, for example, that every evil determination of the will makes the next easy? Moreover, such a course fails to do justice to the idea of the determination of the will itself, in the light of the important fact of our inner life of which we spoke, that all sins do not in the same degree involve guilt.

All such considerations lay far beyond the horizon of our old divines, because from the first their interest was directed to emphasizing as strongly as possible the sinfulness of our natural will. They are always occupied in the first instance with the INTENSITY of the corruption, its hopeless character, apart from Redemption. Habitual sin is for them RADICAL SINFULNESS; that is the loss of the divine image or of the original innate righteous-

ness, together with evil inclination in the deepest sense of the term, "inward impurity, evil desire in the higher powers of our being" (cf. p. 427 f.); in short, a condition thoroughly corrupt, a propensity to evil, so that the indicator of the balance in every case inclines to the wrong side, and sinful man has in himself no power to turn it to the other. The Roman Church prefers to speak merely of weakness on the part of man's free will. Indeed in the baptized it does not admit the existence of sin in the strict sense, but only of the "material" for sin; and though for the attainment of the supernatural goal it demands "the infusion of supernatural grace," when this is once infused it holds that it immediately co-operates with the natural will, and accordingly produces good works under the point of view of merit. The Evangelical Church, on the other hand, strictly maintained that the natural man has completely lost the power of realizing by his own strength the divinely good, which nevertheless is and continues to be his vocation (p. 419 f.); his freedom extends only to civic righteousness. That is, he has "in some measure freedom of will to live an outwardly decent life, and to choose such things as reason can reach unto . . . but not to fear God from the heart, or to have faith" (Augs. Confess. Article 18).

Certainly, however, the last Lutheran Confession is unfortunate in its formulation of this fundamental principle of our Church, when it says (Formula of Concord, 2nd Part, II. 19 ff.) that the heart of the natural man is worse than a stone or a log, inasmuch as it is rebellious against and averse to the will of God. Though such expressions are quite intelligible in their Scriptural context, when converted into dogmatic statements they obscure the character of sin as an act of the will, which is the aspect of it indeed that our evangelical doctrine must be supremely interested in. They land us in con-

tradictions, inasmuch as the enmity in question is looked upon as purely the act of man, while faith in the grace of God is not in any point of view regarded as his decision; and above all they fail once more to recognize the undeniably great individual differences in the degree of opposition on the part of the will. At the same time the proper intention of such statements, as defined in what we have already said, is certainly to be maintained without reservation. It is the general impression made by all the testimonies of revelation, not merely the Pauline and the Johannine (Romans VII. 7 ff. with parallel passages; John III. 8 with parallel passages) but also that of the activity of Jesus, that the sovereign power of God both demands and at the same time alone produces a transformation of man's inmost being (Mk. I. 15 with parallel passages, especially Mt. v. 1 ff.). Jesus never in any external fashion glosses over the differences between those with whom He comes in contact, and never groups them together in any rough and ready estimate as if they constituted one uniform mass, but seeks and finds each one individually in his individual isolation from God; He speaks freely of the righteous and sinners, of the whole and the sick (Luke v. 31 f.). But for that very reason, it is all the more remarkable how He makes every one realize that He is for each and all, and has something for every one, and that the best, the one thing that all need and none have, and that no one can receive except by a complete change, a return home in the spirit of a child and in poverty of spirit. The less obtrusive this is in His teaching, the more He drives it home to us. And the truth He wishes us to realize is just that from which we started, that there is perversion of the will in its inmost core, and that this is so because the will itself is involved; we have to reckon not with a weakness that can easily be got over, but

with a deep-seated false strength, which it is not in our power to overcome. We find ourselves confronted with the decisive question: what is thine ultimate, inmost desire, thy supreme goal? Is it reverently to trust the love of God, and in the power of such trust to love thy neighbour, to dedicate thyself with all thy powers and inclinations to the service of this love, and to use the world as the inexhaustibly glorious means for the realization of a task so inexhaustibly grand, or to deny it when it sets itself in opposition? The question assumes a different form and a different emphasis in the case of every individual, and the sound and colour of the answer also vary in every separate instance; but at bottom we have always to do with one and the same experience. It is the task of Ethics to arrange as well as it can the fullness of the experiences which belong to life. It does so with the help of the much-misused, and therefore not without reason much mistrusted, word *Conversion*, and shows that the word is an indispensable one, when all is said, for it gives expression to a reality of momentous importance ("Ethics," 195 ff.). Ethics is furnished with a specially instructive illustration by Pedagogics, the picture-book of the hopes and disappointments which circle round the question, whether man is good or evil, and what measure of strength belongs to the evil tendency in his will. But we can realize more clearly what a living interest even our own age has in this problem which is concerned with the deepest personal interests of the individual, in spite of appearances to the contrary, when once all that we have said so far regarding the nature of sin as opposition on the part of the will, has been supplemented by the consideration advanced at the start, but always kept in the background in the interests of clearness, that we have to do by no means only with the sin of the individual, but with the

interaction of evil wills upon each other, or a KINGDOM OF SIN.

In reality what we have always to reckon with is a plurality of wills acting in opposition to their vocation, and these not as a sum of isolated self-centred units, but, in conformity with the general laws of our spiritual being, as a communion of wills reacting upon each other. To this potent actuality Holy Scripture gives the name of *the world.* In the traditional Dogmatics of the Church, in place of this profound idea "the world," we find that of the mass of corruption: by the first sin all are entangled in the same sin and guilt, as if the realm of nature were involved. The character of the will is infringed upon, and its individuality is lost in regard to the nature and measure of the opposition to the good. But just as one-sided was the Pelagian atomism of the Dogmatics of the rationalistic type, the idea of a sum of separate but at bottom good wills, which, coming to be freely related to each other, have of course to suffer from evil example. Emphasizing as it did anew the idea of the Kingdom of God, Pietism found a new meaning for its opposite, the idea of the world, but the latter, like the former, was narrowed by comparison with its fundamental New Testament significance. This was restored to it by Schleiermacher under the title *Kingdom of Sin;* and the richness of the life of modern civilization gave it a content of the utmost variety and an ever-changing application, without, however, passing beyond the root idea of the New Testament. For as the world is described as being a world of offences (Mt. XVIII. 7), and it is explained by simple examples of all kinds what an offence is, the word *world* is as graphic and popular as it is definite. And as it not only embraces those occurrences which spring directly from the perversion of the will, but brings into relation

with sin absolutely the whole compass of our experience, it is still more comprehensive than Kingdom of Sin, or it brings before us still more directly the all-embracing all-pervading power of sin of which we speak. Desire and care of this world, fear and love of the world, hatred of the world and anxiety about it, to live for the world and to be crucified to it—the expressions denote actually an infinite world of Christian experience. Ethics has to show in detail how it is that the world is full of offences (cf. "Ethics," pp. 150 ff.); here it is sufficient to refer to the root idea; they are the outcome of reciprocal action on the part of sinful wills, with their motives, standards, and purposes, including all the occurrences, relations, or circumstances produced or altered by them. In this reciprocal action all are bound up with each other to an extent that human judgment cannot measure. This does not apply to contemporaries merely; each generation receives an inheritance from the past and transmits one to the future. Nor does the reciprocal action involve only all individuals in their dealings with each other; it affects all sorts of common relationships, the family, education, nationality, religion. In this acting and reacting of wills upon each other, "each is the work of all and all are the work of each". This statement needs only to be made, to understand what significance the idea of the world or the kingdom of sin has for all the ideas regarding sin, which we have discussed thus far, so that it is only now that we are in a position to deal with them in definitive fashion. Our success will depend upon the clearness with which, at the same time, we realize that the Kingdom of Sin is not externally separated from the Kingdom of God, in this present stage of its development. The wills to be found acting and reacting upon each other are of all degrees of relative goodness as well as evil. Even those

who are in principle renewed (regenerated or converted) still carry within them elements of the old, and consequently have at work in them purposes, standards and motives where good and evil are so intertwined, that they cannot be disentangled by human judgment.

Looking backwards we understand now much more clearly what had to be said of the *content* of sin: it is because the individual will is entangled in such a Kingdom of Sin that the separate aspects of sin assume their distinctive character, the lack of self-restraint or of love of which we spoke, and what is the deepest root of these, the lack of religion. But this applies quite as much to the nature of sin *according to its form* as opposition on the part of the will. *The direction of the will* in relation to *the individual volitional act*, and still more the *radical perversion of the will*, appear in a clearer light after we realize how evil wills act and react upon each other. But above all we must once again direct attention to the distinction between *sin* and *guilt*, from this higher point of view. For the statement, "everyone the work of all," inevitably raises the question, "Is everyone wholly and solely the work of all?"

This question we have already answered in the negative when, in spite of the radical incapacity of the will for what is truly good, we had to lay down that there are different degrees of opposition on the part of the will, and saw that on this fact the distinction between sin and guilt, as well as between manifold degrees of guilt itself, is founded. Now upon the basis of our knowledge of the Kingdom of Sin, we can say that with greater precision. Its power helps us in large measure to understand the distinction in question. There is much sin in the world which is not guilt on the part of individuals, because they are led into sin by the offence of the world, before they have the measure of insight and strength necessary

to withstand temptation. Others may have the guilt, but it is not their personal guilt, however great the certainty that it is sin. It is true that this statement is not always unreservedly admitted; indeed it is denied for reasons the intention of which is creditable. We are responsible, it is said, not only for the fact that we do not do our part to overcome the opposition to the good, but also for the fact that the opposition exists in such strength in ourselves. "Certainly," we reply, "in numberless instances; indeed it is a sure proof of moral sensibility that in our self-condemnation we do not confine our attention to the moment of our sinning, but ask ourselves whether and how that moment was prepared for by previous guilt. But we cannot admit that, as soon as we recognize something in ourselves as morally evil, we make ourselves responsible for it. Our conclusion must be that sin is that which, when measured by an objective standard, does not conform thereto; but guilt is sin for which we have knowingly and willingly decided, or the cause of which we are compelled to seek in earlier decisions knowingly and willingly come to. And even the most conscientious self-examination does not make the extent of our personal sin coincide with that of our personal guilt." It is not easy to give expression to this truth in a manner not liable to be misunderstood. It is earnest Christian circles which incline to the contrary opinion, and see in the one of which we have just approved at least the danger of making light of sin. Appeal is also made to the testimony of the great in the Kingdom of God in favour of the stricter view. In such appeal to an Augustine or Luther, to say nothing of those whose confessions do not so unquestionably breathe the atmosphere of absolute truthfulness, one is apt to forget how alien it is to such confessions to strike an exact balance of thought, such thought as bears on

the question, how much of the oppressive sense of sin is personal guilt in the strictest sense. "O my guilt," becomes in all sincerity, "O the infinitude of my guilt," without any quantitative identification of sin and guilt. Or on the other hand, are we to hold that the consciousness of guilt is absent from what Paul says in Romans VII., because taking him literally he refers only to the thraldom of sin? In what we have said we are far from denying, on the contrary we emphatically assert, that the feeling of personal guilt deepens and broadens with the progress of the Christian life. If the expression be allowed, material from the general stores of the consciousness of personal sin, is being drawn in ever-increasing quantity into the hidden furnace of intimate personal responsibility, and that furnace is felt to be always hotter. It is not morbid self-torment which makes the individual judgment more and more, as time goes on, lay bare the delicate ramifications, and hidden roots of the inward corruption, whereas at first it confined itself to single more or less manifest errors and "gross" sins; and makes the sense of guilt deepen at the same time. In particular this is the case in the measure in which the nature of sin according to its content is more fully known, and seen to be lack of religion. We no longer ask ourselves, in however earnest and heart-searching a fashion, where and how love and self-discipline should and could have gained the victory. The question we now put is, how often we have neglected God's still, tender wooing of our souls, "have glorified Him not, neither given thanks," and how we have thus obstructed our own heavenward path, and deprived ourselves of the power of really becoming good in all the other relations involved as well. But it is when this truth is emphasized as strongly as possible, that the interests of truthfulness

impose upon us the duty of maintaining our position regarding the distinction between sin and guilt, and affirming that for the individual the two do not coincide. The distinction is not to be obliterated by the circumstance, that the admission we have made is used to support the conclusion that, because an ever-increasing amount of sin is recognized as guilt, in the end all sin will be so recognized. Certainly external purely self-righteous ways of measuring and computing our sinfulness, will ever fall more and more into the background; the judgment the sinner passes is compatible with and demanded by the truth, that he has made his own what was at first foreign to him,—but this does not mean that he has made all of it his own in the sense of strictly personal guilt. This is what is borne out ultimately even by those confessions of the great in the Kingdom of God, of which we have spoken, when we take the trouble of understanding them with precision; above all—and this is what settles the point—it is borne out by the method of Jesus in dealing with souls, and the manner in which this method is ever confirmed anew in the souls which trust themselves to it. From the many masters, who, though it is their earnest intention to make sin duly sinful, often do not refrain from exaggeration and undue pressure, the person who does not wish to deceive himself or to let himself be deceived, turns for safety, even in this anxiety which is above all others a personal one, to the One Master, who speaks the words, "Ye who are evil," or rather causes him to experience them in his own heart, in such wise that all excuses which are not of the truth are silenced, but at the same time any apparent advance beyond the simple truth is set aside as an exaggeration. And in His school one learns how it is that even outside the Christian community, at all stages and in all kinds of

religion, there may be found at least a presentiment inclining one to say—I did not give myself life, but I live as if I lived by my own power and might live for myself; and in this consists my guilt.

Again we may say that the position we have laid down would certainly be more generally accepted, if matters were not complicated by the question of the ultimate origin of sin, which we have reserved. We have not yet come to the question whether all *sin involves personal guilt, although all the sin of an individual does not involve personal guilt on his part.* But we have been able to see how inevitable the question is. It is all the more inevitable, the more accurately we construe the concept of the Kingdom of Sin. By thinking out the idea of reciprocal action fully, we receive in fact an important aid towards the solution of the problem of the origin. In every case of such reciprocal action every one is the object of the working of all, and the subject of the working upon all. In so far as he is object, the sin in him is largely inevitable, he is under a necessity; in so far as in the strictest sense of the term, he is subject, sin is avoidable on his part, it is his personal guilt. It is easy to undervalue the significance of this truth, which is one capable of directing our judgment of ourselves to a much greater extent than we are often inclined to admit. But in any case it does not give us the last word; for the answer in question raises new problems, which resolve themselves into the one indicated above. Still, the positions we have already established guard us against superficial answers to this last great problem. It is said, e.g. "guilt is a Jewish delusion, which has come down to us by inheritance," or "there is not guilt at all except when the shining form of Jesus confronts us; but that is a consciousness of guilt of a purely religious kind, and has

nothing to do with freedom and responsibility". In such statements everything is obscure; above all, the careless confusion of the questions of fact and of origin. But thoroughly obscure too is that assertion that there is guilt only when we are face to face with Jesus; as if the greatest guilt were not just what it is, but yet had its very real preparatory forms at all stages of Christian or non-Christian life.

Little further need be said upon the only one now remaining of the concepts which we put in the forefront, that namely of the UNIVERSALITY OF SIN. From the standpoint of the Christian faith in revelation, it is a presupposition for the universality of redemption or a conclusion drawn therefrom (Rom. III. 20). But at the same time it is accepted as a fact of experience not merely in the preliminary revelation of the Old Testament, but by the general consciousness of humanity in the measure of the development of the moral sense. Further, it has always been noticed that the universality of sin has been held most absolutely by the relatively best of men, while sceptics are found most frequently among those who condemn not only the moral consciousness, but even the requirements of law. All the more remarkable will the single exception, Jesus' judgment of Himself, appear to us even at this stage of our studies.

Is there any point of contact between these principles of Christian religious knowledge regarding the nature of sin, and THE PRESENT-DAY CONSCIOUSNESS? It is as impossible to answer this question in a concise epigrammatic phrase, as it is to speak of the modern consciousness generally as a homogeneous entity (pp. 2 ff.). Certainly Renan's "What of sin? I believe I am mastering it," will make small impression on the Ger-

man mind. But even in Goethe we find, alongside of profound words regarding sin and guilt, and that too not in the years of his exuberant strength alone, traces of an optimism foreign to Christian faith. The moral law and the law of nature come closer together than Christian faith permits; the moral fact itself becomes a beautiful natural phenomenon; the poet will let nothing seduce him into being good and evil, like nature. And though the well-known words upon original sin apply to it in the first instance as an extreme refinement of sheer dogmatism, they support nevertheless the view of "the infinite goodness of the human will". But to the same observer we are indebted not merely for the statement that the knowledge of sin is the doorway to Christian faith, but for this other so striking in its simplicity, which indeed belongs to an earlier date: "The thing, the evil thing never yet explained, which separates us from the Being to whom we owe life—the Being from whom everything worthy to be called life must derive its support—the thing that is called sin I knew as yet not at all". Subsequently this tendency to underestimate sin, and to confuse between the ethical and the natural, grew, and spread among the masses beyond the narrow circles of the initiated. This applies especially to the opposition to the ecclesiastical doctrine of the complete corruption of the natural man in things spiritual (which was natural enough when this world of the perfectly good God became for many a dissolving phantom). But there were not wanting too those who pointed earnestly to sin as the great enigma which is not solved by being denied. In particular, many a long-cherished illusion as to the goodness of the human heart, was destroyed by searching examination of the actual facts. Naturalism in laying bare the natural roots of the moral life found them in many respects

so tainted, that long forgotten expressions of the ecclesiastical Dogmatics regarding the lack of freedom on the part of the will, seemed scarcely strong enough; and recognition of the reciprocal action of evil wills upon each other, as well as of the way they are intertwined with nature, secured for the idea of original sin new adherents among its most decided contemners, though responsibility was now denied more absolutely than ever before, and the fearful "spectres" haunting the sphere of sex relations were subjected to the iron law of necessity. And yet often immediately alongside of such ideas, or inseparably connected with them, we find not only deeper knowledge of the will, but also unreserved admission of its power and actually spirited encomiums upon its functions, its world-renewing ideals! Strange though it sounds, Nietzsche's prophetic activity has reawakened in many a belief in the will, which could become a belief in the contemned divine message of the freeing of the enslaved will.

Only whatever judgment we may form regarding the relation of the modern consciousness to the Christian doctrine of the nature of sin, in any case it is incumbent upon us to concentrate attention most closely upon this doctrine itelf, when we inquire now regarding the ideas of the Christian faith on the question of the origin of sin.

The Origin of Sin

The fact that, and the reason why, the question of the origin comes second have already been explained. It is really not of equal importance with the question of the nature. All the same we have to do with a problem which necessarily arises. How much this is the case may be illustrated by the fact that, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, Daub's "Judas Iscariot" was

still possible. That is to say, he ventured upon the dualistic answer, in order to be able to give any sort of answer at all. We have now become more discreet and wary, but every one knows by experience that the old question of the origin of evil grips him with a power all its own, when he reflects upon the mystery of his own being.

The knowledge of the *nature* of sin is at all events the *norm* for the knowledge of its *origin* (pp. 415 ff.). For we would like to understand the fact of sin, so far as we are capable of so doing, without doing violence to that fact. This fundamental principle gives us a centre, round which the almost innumerable answers to our question group themselves, so that we can give a summary survey. There are then three main answers; namely that sin is to be regarded as necessary, or that the idea of freedom is to be asserted as the last thought concerning its origin, or that the two are to be combined. Now manifestly the last course is the most natural one to attempt, if, in accordance with the norm to which we have referred, we pass from the treatment of its actual nature to that of its origin. For in dealing with the former question, we came to two conclusions: sin is to be regarded as opposition on the part of the will, but with all conceivable gradations of personal guilt in the strictest sense of the term, up to complete absence of freedom on the part of the will; while again the individual sinful wills are merged in the Kingdom of Sin. In this accurate construction of the facts there was involved to some extent an answer to the question of the origin, and we had always to be on our guard against unwittingly encroaching upon the question of the ultimate origin. Should we not therefore say now, when we deliberately raise this question, that the facts point to a combination of both answers; there is truth in both; the correct

answer has a place for both freedom and necessity? Only it is more in accordance with the impulse of the human soul in favour of a single ultimate, to conceive of even the apparently free as necessary, or the apparently necessary as free. By reason of the consciousness of guilt, unbiassed Christian instinct, in its depths as awakened by the Christian view of God, inclines towards the latter alternative; philosophical reflection inclines towards the former, for us moderns especially in the form of the all-dominating theory of evolution, though philosophy is often reinforced apparently by a motive which is fundamental in the religious point of view. In what follows, we start therefore from the theories which, in accordance with the remark made above, can be summarily referred to as theories of the freedom of the will. Within this group we begin with the most radical ones, which on that account are in the most manifest contradiction to the facts of the case, which showed us that sin in one aspect of it is inevitable; and we conclude with the most imposing, which at the same time takes into most careful consideration, and seeks to understand, this aspect of the situation, namely the ecclesiastical doctrine of original sin. The discovery that notwithstanding, in its traditional form, it fails to do justice to the full truth of sin as we have established it, leads to the theories of necessity. Among them, precisely as before, we deal first with those which, on the other hand,are least successful in explaining what had to be said of guilt which points to freedom; then come the attempts which deliberately seek to reckon with this objection, without however acknowledging freedom in principle. Should these also not be entirely successful, the inclination is to try without prejudice the attempt to mediate between freedom *and* necessity which recommended itself first as most

obvious, but which, however, did little to meet the demand for the unification of knowledge, and consequently was put aside. Finally, if even this way does not lead to the goal, the question may be raised whether it may not be possible, by taking all these attempts into consideration, to develop the ecclesiastical doctrine in harmony with the fundamental ideas of revelation, and to state it in unobjectionable form ; or whether we must not refrain altogether from seeking a satisfactory solution of the problem, and why we must do so. In short, there is a great variety of possibilities. Still we shall not be confused by them, if we keep in mind the principle of division we have adopted.

Theories of the Freedom of the Will

Among these, there is no need to spend time over the theory of PURE INDETERMINISM, which regards every single sin as proceeding from the unconditioned choice of a completely undetermined will, because apart altogether from all the inherent objections by which it is weighed down, it completely ignores a series of the most important facts which we established when investigating the nature of sin, especially the fact of the evil tendency of the will, as well as of the reciprocal action of evil wills upon each other in the Kingdom of Sin. Again the charge of underestimating, to say the least, the fact last mentioned must be brought against those who, partly with discriminating emphasis upon important moments, assert *a fall on the part of each individual* in the dark beginnings of the personal life, without thereby seeking to exclude subsequent freedom of decision. The stress it lays upon the personal character of the guilt of sin, may always commend such a theory to some ; and the objection that all of us must have retained the recollection of so weighty a decision, is

perhaps invalid, since so far as such recollection is lacking, its place might have been taken by the consciousness of guilt which is the consequence of the individual fall. But this theory fails to distinguish with sufficient precision between sin and guilt, and underestimates the undeniable influence of the sinful society. In order to be freed from this objection, it would have to be so seriously modified, that it would pass over into theories which we shall afterwards have to discuss.

A theory often rejected on purely superficial grounds is the PREDETERMINIST one of a pre-existent fall, happening anterior to time, or more accurately out of time, yet conditioning temporal existence. The motive of this theory at all events is quite intelligible. It starts from the dilemma: If sin is inevitable, what place is there for freedom, the presupposition of the sense of guilt? If man is free, why should sin be inevitable? and sees the only way of escape from this dilemma in the view before us (Julius Müller). But again it cannot be concealed that the theory, at least in its ordinary form, is not sufficiently careful to take as its starting-point the actual nature of sin as indicated above; it isolates the individual from the community, the Kingdom of Sin, and it is far too ready to construe all sin as guilt. The reverse side of the latter exaggeration very soon shows itself. It becomes only too easy to look upon no sin as in the strictest sense guilt. In fact even in Origen the idea of a pre-existent Fall approximated toward the speculative transformation, the view namely that the finite as such is sinful. Hence there is little need in Dogmatics to prove that for us at all events every idea of such a decision is forbidden. But the theory has at least the merit of impressing the seriousness of the problem upon those who are hasty in judgment, when it is taken in connexion, say, with Kant's and Schopen-

hauer's advocacy of the idea of intelligible freedom. Perhaps one or two may take it up again at the end of the long journey which still lies ahead of us, and occupy themselves more seriously with it.

While naturally it is mostly only isolated thinkers and smaller circles who are interested in the theory of a fall anterior to time, the last theory in our group which calls for discussion, namely THE ECCLESIASTICAL DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN, is not only widely prevalent still, but can in the first instance give a good account of itself on rational grounds. For as compared with all the attempts so far mentioned, it commends itself by the clearness with which it sets itself to maintain in the most unambiguous manner possible, that God is in no sense the Author of sin (Augsburg Confession, 19), but the evil will itself, while yet at the same time recognizing that as a matter of fact evil is in great measure unavoidable; a position which it endeavours to reconcile with the other by regarding such unavoidableness, or the evil tendency of the will in the case of all men united as they are in the Kingdom of Sin, as the result of the first sin, where freedom was a reality.

We can form an accurate judgment as to how far the ecclesiastical doctrine of original sin achieves its purpose, only if we realize this purpose itself in all its wideness of range. Such judgment naturally concerns itself both with the idea of the *Fall itself*, and with that of its *consequences;* and the standard of judgment in the one case is found in the conclusions arrived at in the matter of the divine image, in the other, in those regarding the nature of sin. Now we had to reject the theory of original righteousness as self-contradictory, and at the same time as not borne out by the statements of Holy Scripture. Here, however, we must add: from such a state of perfection a fall is inconceivable, and that too not

only in the sense in which sin generally can be spoken of as inconceivable, if the idea of freedom is to be allowed full scope, but because of the greatness of original righteousness which is presupposed. Christian faith must protest against such a possibility; otherwise it would lose the joyful confidence that when once we reach the state of perfection, the disturbing possibility of a change of will can no longer trouble us. In addition to this first error there is the second, involved, doubtless, in the first, in the case of our old divines, that they thought of the effect of the first sin upon Adam himself as unlimited. By it alone he brought upon himself a perversion of the direction of his will, in the sense indicated above (as regards extent and depth). We saw that this too could be maintained only if there was no proper regard for the nature of the will.

Still more serious are the objections to the doctrine of the *consequences* of this fall. They apply to the view held as to what it is that is transmitted to us, and how it is transmitted—as to the matter of these consequences, and the manner of their occurrence. In the first place, the content of what we inherit from Adam is vaguely defined. This is so not in the view of some Reason which must first prove its legitimacy, but in that of the Christian Reason—the religious knowledge which rests upon revelation and is defined by it. The great truth of the Kingdom of Sin is undervalued; what can be comprehended as resulting from the reciprocal action of evil wills upon each other, is construed by the traditional doctrine without proof, as being the direct consequence of the single first sin. In the second place, the perverted direction of the will is wrongly looked upon as the direct and in the last instance the sole cause of the separate sinful actions; and in consequence the great differences of degree, as regards the opposition of the

will to the divine commandment, are underrated. Besides, by reason of the sin of the first man, all men have become sinners, to the extent above indicated of radical corruption of the will. If in the connexion aforementioned, while fully accepting the fundamental thought of our Church, we were yet compelled to find a lack of precision in the expression given to the truth in question, the same thing obviously applies here also. In other words, the thesis regarding the origin of sin, that "all the sin of all men is the direct consequence of the first sin of the first man," is not in exact accord with the nature of sin. But it is rendered still more self-contradictory by the fact, that a *guilty* character is ascribed to this sin, the consequence of the first sin. Zwingli stands alone in his estimate of inherited sin as a "Presten," i.e. a sickness. Elsewhere it is uniformly regarded as actually guilty sin, involving even now the penalty of eternal damnation; and it is a proof of how seriously this is meant, that the exception in favour of unbaptized infants is rejected (Augs. Conf. Art. 2, Form. of Conc. I, Art. 12). It is true that even here the intention of the doctrine is unimpeachable, but its detailed application does not fit in with the facts of the nature of sin, in this case, the necessary distinction between sin and guilt. This must be recognized, otherwise there is a danger that if all sin is guilt, in the end no sin is regarded as being in the strict sense guilt. But here this objection is reinforced by the other, that just as we cannot attribute guilt to ourselves for anything which we merely inherit, so we cannot reconcile it with the love of God, that He should burden us with such guilt.

All these objections affecting the consequences of the first sin, which hitherto we have considered from the point of view of its content (generally and its guilt in particular), acquire much greater force still, when we

come to consider what is asserted of the form of its working, turning from the question of what is transmitted to that of how it is transmitted. By heredity, the answer tells us, the first sin has become the sin of all; it is propagated by means of the act of generation. Once again, and with increased emphasis, we must say this explanation fails to realize clearly what it is that has to be explained. If sin is essentially opposition on the part of the will, its origin cannot be found in heredity. To be sure, all possible dispositions to sin may be inherited, but not sin itself, strictly regarded. At this point the doctrine is penalized for its lack of precision in defining the nature of sin; it was not clearly recognized that it is perversion of the will. Under these circumstances it was not seen that there is any contradiction in identifying the first man with the general concept "man," so that when Adam sins all sin. This objection affects at the same time the other thought which our old Dogmatic theologians often emphasize almost more strongly than they do that of transmission by heirship, when they wish to explain how it is that our sin is rooted in that of Adam. It is only in the Lutheran Church indeed that special attention has been given to the latter thought; but even there it is so to speak bound up with the idea of the righteousness of the divine judgment upon the first sin. Only no theory of Adam, whether as the physical head or as the representative of mankind, is sufficient to silence the question how in such case, the love of God who is righteous and wise, is reconcilable with the awful consequences of the first sin, regarded as the sole cause of all sin—sin too which, in the statement that "because of Adam's sin we are all guilty, and liable to the hatred of God," is declared to be guilt.

It is true that in reference to almost all these points

in the ecclesiastical doctrine of original sin, the question arises whether it can hold its own, provided that the positions manifestly untenable are surrendered unreservedly, and only the intention they have in view is retained in other and unassailable form. The old divines doubtless proved too much, and so failed to prove anything. But their intention was to accept the fact that sin is in large measure unavoidable, and at the same time to explain all sin as being in the last resort the act of human freedom. Accordingly the course which first suggests itself is to reconstruct the traditional doctrine along these lines, or if this also should prove inadequate, to adopt the attempt to mediate between freedom and necessity, of which we spoke at the start. Only it is quite easy to understand why the deviations from the ecclesiastical doctrine of original sin, do not in the first instance follow either the one course or the other. In both cases human freedom is earnestly affirmed, however carefully safeguarded the statement of it may be. But it is the idea of freedom which is the great stumbling-block for the modern consciousness; and to choose the former alternative and develop the ecclesiastical doctrine at the same time, implies a judgment regarding the origins of our race, in regard to which the attitude of the modern consciousness is, to say the least, sceptical. Thus the tendency is rather to follow out to its strict logical conclusion the idea of *necessity*, and to bring it into line as well as possible with the fact of sin. Obviously if we follow this procedure, difficulty is caused by those aspects of the concept of sin which are quite simple upon the libertarian theories, and *vice versa*.

The Necessitarian Theories

It is by no means all the attempts to conceive of evil as necessary, which call for serious consideration in

Dogmatics. At the very outset we can without discussion dispose of those theories which regard FINITE and SINFUL AS INTERCHANGEABLE TERMS, if this means some sort of dualistic view of the world: the Christian view of God being presupposed, there can be no question of any such. But we may also discard the theories which content themselves with a quite general use of that idea, to the effect that evil taken by itself appears as such only to our limited intelligence, which looks at things in isolation, but that it is good when considered in relation to the whole cosmic system. What we have to see as good and evil, God can see blending in one ray of light: this idea is capable of making an impression at times, especially when set forth in poetic guise; but it is too notoriously in contradiction to the frightful reality of evil. And as Lotze asks, "Of what use is a consolation, the force of which depends on the order of a sentence"? For what becomes of our statement when we invert it and say, "Looking at the world in the mass we find harmony, but when we look at the separate parts it is full of misery and sin"?

Much greater respect is due to the elaboration of the idea that SIN IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS ARISING OUT OF THE NATURE OF FINITE PERSONALITY, which is by nature so conditioned that it cannot develop itself except by means of sin; from which it follows on the other hand that sin exists solely as a means for the realization of the good, which alone is willed by God. This view, which is favoured by many, has been elaborated with most subtilty by Schleiermacher. We have the consciousness of sin as often as the consciousness of God, which exists as an element in an experience of the inner life, conditions our self-consciousness as pain, and we understand sin therefore as a positive opposition of the lower consciousness to the higher, of the flesh to the spirit. Further

we are conscious of this conflict as due to the influence exerted over us by a time, when the bent towards the consciousness of God had not yet emerged. In other words, the flesh has the start of the spirit, the evil of the good. We understand this fact as due to the nature of our moral development, namely because our intellectual development and our will-power necessarily fail to keep pace with each other. The good presents itself to us (at all events in a moral community already existing), as in some sense a homogeneous ideal, while manifestly a single act of will can realize only one side of the ideal. Take the case of the impression made by a noble mother upon the mind of a child; the child cannot possibly by an act of will appropriate this ideal in its entirety, while on the other hand the intelligence with the help of the imagination sees it as a whole. Similarly in moments of inspiration, the ideal presents itself to our consciousness in living form, but it is only by long-continued work that the will is able gradually to actualize it. Now inasmuch as this necessarily disproportionate development, so far from doing away with the good is wholly and solely due to the action of the good, Schleiermacher logically concludes, we should have to rest satisfied with the position that evil is simply the consciousness, produced in us by individual acts and moods, of good which is not yet ours; i.e. the consciousness of sin would have to be understood entirely as the indispensable means for the realization of the good. But why does he say only, "We should have," and "would have," and not, "we have," and "has"? Schleiermacher answers that such a statement could scarcely be regarded as Christian, for with the reality of sin the necessity of redemption disappears; in the Christian Church, the certainty with which in outstanding moments we are conscious of the good, is a certainty that all the moments in which we have the

consciousness of sin are avoidable; and we are fully convinced that actual opposition is not inevitable, by the certainty we have of a sinless development, namely that of Christ, on account of which we have to construe sin as a violation of nature.

The *contradiction* in which Schleiermacher here involves himself is *undeniable.* He shows how sin can be understood as unavoidably bound up with the natural development, and yet asserts that the Christian Church must look upon it as avoidable on general grounds, and especially on account of the sinless development of Christ. But in his Christology he says that the possibility of such a development was shown in the doctrine of sin, whereas on the contrary its impossibility was there proved, and the possibility was asserted only in the case of Christ. But this contradiction is as instructive as it is irremediable. How essentially repugnant to the feeling of the Christian Church must be the view that sin is inevitable, and how deep-seated must be the conviction of the sinlessness of Jesus, when the repugnance and the conviction in question keep Schleiermacher himself from being true to his theory, after elaborating it with all the appliances of dialectical subtlety. But we can also understand, how others did not let such scruples prevent their maintaining the necessity of sin, with thorough-going consistency, on Schleiermacher's principles. Naturally in opposing their attitude, we can get an advantage only by proving that these principles themselves are invalid. As a matter of fact, however, it is possible to do this.

The positions in question regarding the lack of uniformity in the development of the intelligence and the will, do not prove what they are supposed to prove, the necessity of sin, the inevitableness of the consciousness of sin. More precisely: the description which they give

of the progress of our inner life, is as incontestable as regards one part of it, as the other part is false. It is quite true that moral knowledge advances more rapidly than the moral will; all that Schleiermacher says on this point is true to life. But that this advance of the one beyond the other comes to our consciousness as sin, is false. In numberless instances it is not the case even in our present experience (with regard to which we have not yet decided, whether it is not itself an experience determined by previous guilt on the part either of others or of ourselves, so that it cannot be taken as solely the outcome of our own natural development). For we are far from feeling that the disparity between our moral insight and our moral will-power, is essentially personal opposition to the good. On the contrary we regard it as pointing to a goal in front of us, which we are under obligation to reach, experiencing it as a stimulus to good. In this connexion we can even admit without hesitation that there is a certain conflict, namely among those unregulated impulses and inclinations of which we spoke, which become tributary to the moral end, only when controlled by the moral law (pp. 431 f.). This conflict too and the feeling of pain associated with it, is not the consciousness of sin. On the contrary, we understand it exclusively as a prerequisite of actual temptation, without which there is no moral development (cf. Christology). But that this natural conflict and this natural pain must become personal opposition to the good or sin, is an assertion that takes for granted what has to be proved. Thus it is only a confusion between imperfection and sin that makes it possible to hold, that sin is something which cannot be avoided in the progress to moral personality. As we are circumstanced, the duty of distinguishing from the very start between imperfection and sin, is

perfectly clear: but on the other hand it is by insight into this confusion of which we speak, that the capacity to do so has grown. Lastly fresh light is now shed upon our previous distinction between sin and guilt and our contention in support of it. Guilt is opposition at any stage of the development to good which is not only acknowledged to be such, but is within the power of the will in the moment of decision, or in the sequence after previous decisions; whereas sin is any opposition on the part of the will to the good generally, whatever may be felt about the possibility of submitting ourselves to it (cf. pp. 433 ff., 443 ff.). The assertion which is often assented to at present that not only past transgression, but every advance in the moral life, is accompanied by the sense of "*Schuld*," is nothing but an inexactitude with the appearance of cleverness, a play upon the word "*Schuld*" (which in German means both "guilt" and "obligation"). For if we deal honestly with ourselves, we are aware of a great difference between having failed to yield to the attraction and the elevating influence of a demand pointing us to a better way, and feeling with our whole hearts that we have incurred the condemnation from which there is no escape, of having had no will, of not consenting to be affected, to be submissive, to be attracted, or to be elevated.

In short, it cannot be proved that sin is a necessary consequence of the nature of man's moral development. But perhaps without being able to understand it in the manner claimed, we can rest contented with the fact that it cannot be escaped. What restrains many from this attitude, and rightly so, is the *fact of the sense of guilt.* This is true, even when the very appearance of all pious exaggeration is avoided, as we have sought to do. "I am guilty," certainly means more than, "I ought to have acted otherwise". In addition to the recognition of the

specific demerit of the evil action, there is the judgment that it is a violation of the unconditional commandment, that which absolutely ought to be. But, "I am guilty," means more than this. It means, "I am responsible for having so acted". It is an acknowledgment that the speaker is himself the cause of the deed in question, and has acted as he had no right to do. A great deal of ingenuity has been employed to explain away this fact of the consciousness of guilt, and to resolve the second moment into the first. The twofold meaning of the German phrase "schuldig sein," i.e. "to be guilty" and "to be indebted," has been partly responsible for this. It is true that nowadays verbal subtleties are less in favour than they used to be. An instance is the well-known statement which used to be so popular, that one should not say, "I could not have acted otherwise," or, "I could have acted otherwise," but only, "I am not as I should be". But in the last resort, all the latest explanations, which resolve the sense of guilt simply into a stimulus to moral progress, do not get beyond denying the actual facts of the case, or doing injustice to one of the moments in our consciousness of guilt of which we spoke. Certainly every one who is not content merely to acquiesce in the statement that he is not as he should be, but endeavours to understand the sense of freedom as a guarantee of future submission on his part to the unconditional moral law, deserves credit for his moral earnestness. But it is only by the person who is already convinced, i.e. who has decided to surrender the idea of freedom, by reason of the metaphysical difficulties connected with it, that this view will be regarded as affording any material aid towards our understanding of the fact of the inner life involved.

Naturally all such attempts to give a new turn to the sense of guilt, must come to terms in Dogmatics with

the Christian view of God, and the two lines of thought are essentially connected with each other. In this also they follow the lead of Schleiermacher. That is they emphasize as strongly as possible the idea that sin is ordered by God solely with a view to redemption. Only the revelation of God in Christ is so completely a revelation of Holy Love and a very thorough condemnation of sin, that this teleological way of looking at the matter is insufficient; it looks like the most subtle, but at the same time the most hurtful, application of the principle that the end justifies the means: God brings about an illusory sense of guilt with a view to the realization of the good. Can the good and the true be so opposed to each other? The words of Augustine, "O Blessed Guilt," are strictly Christian, only when in them the faith that God makes even the guilt of man serve the glorious realization of His loving purpose—without doing away with its guilty character,—bursts forth into rapt strains of adoration. Only in this sense is it true that one "must thank God even for one's sins". Otherwise this "teleological" method of dealing with evil falls under the condemnation of the apostle of grace (Rom. III. 7 f.). This fundamental objection to all the necessitarian theories, even the most cautious of them, is somewhat softened where the principle, that under other conditions than those of the earthly existence, sin will be perfectly conquered, finds unqualified acceptance. Then the governing and the creative will of God cannot be opposed to each other, at least eternally. Accordingly many Dogmatic theologians emphasize Eschatology at this stage, when giving us their doctrine of sin.

Attempts to Mediate

But the more earnestly such cautions are meant, the more evidently have we, without being aware of it, ap-

proximated to the attempt which seeks to employ, for the solution of the problem, FREEDOM AND NECESSITY acting in some sort of CONJUNCTION, and manifestly occupying a definite relation to each other. This was the procedure which the state of the facts seemed to point to in the first instance (cf. pp. 451 f.). The natural course, indeed, is with all emphasis to give freedom what belongs to freedom (according to the facts of the case), and to give necessity what, for the same reason, belongs or seems to belong to necessity. Thus arose the theory that in the beginnings of the race as well as of the individual life, permeation by sin is an ordinance of God *from which there is no escape*, for finite personalities using material existence as the instrument of their self-development, but only as a *presupposition* for *truly free* decisions in favour of the good in the later development. With the growth of the moral life of the race, as well as of the individual, sin according to the theory, becomes progressively avoidable, and in Christ the originator and head of the new humanity, it is in principle overcome, and in the fellowship instituted by Him, it is to be progressively overcome by the faithful. With great speculative power this idea has been expounded by R. Rothe, and recently by Troeltsch among others, the modern idea of development being called into requisition; and for reasons which are easily understood, it is taken in connexion with the idea of Predestination, while there is a resolute outlook towards Eschatology. Perhaps still more attractiveness might be given to attempts of the kind, by expressly limiting the conception of guilt in the strictest sense to the thoroughly conscious and deliberate rejection of grace, after it had become fully operative for the individual. By traversing the course of sin, one which is essentially characterized by numerous gradations, we would be gradually

prepared for the possibility of a real act,—in the strict sense the one unique act—of freedom, namely the acceptance or rejection of that grace of God which puts to one the personal question bearing on eternal salvation.

The attractiveness of such a theory lies above all in the fact, that it makes no affirmation regarding the origins of our race, which by any possibility can come into conflict with any discoveries or opinions of the modern history of civilization; and at the same time that the sense of guilt does not need to be described as illusory, while the sinfulness of all individuals again seems to be intelligible. Only inasmuch as in one definite relation at least, freedom, to which the modern consciousness has such a deadly hostility, is unreservedly admitted, the modern consciousness will not find very much satisfaction in this attempt to meet it; nor on the other hand will Christian judgment lightly surrender its objection on principle to even so limited an acceptance of necessity.

The Remodelling of the Doctrine of the Church

Failing to get any unqualified satisfaction even out of such a variety of possibilities, many next turn again to the MOTIVE OF THE CHURCH DOCTRINE, and ask whether the end it has in view can be accomplished by some modification of its form, free from the manifest defects which we pointed out above. We found its ruling motive in the desire to prevent God's being regarded as in any sense the Author of sin, while at the same time recognizing the unavoidableness of sin, so far as experience unquestionably certifies thereto. This double end it seeks to attain by referring the unavoidableness itself to an act of man's free will, the first sin of the first man (pp. 454 ff.). The objections applied both to the defini-

tion of the first sin and to that of its consequences. On the other hand, our criticism itself pointed directly to the improvements which are necessary in this respect, but are perhaps also possible.

We must not conceive of man's *original condition* as a state of implanted moral and religious perfection, but in harmony with the hints of Holy Scripture as well as of the Reformers, as a state of "childlike innocence"; or more accurately, we must presuppose such capacity for moral and religious personality, as makes the temptation indispensable for its realization possible, but does not necessitate our yielding to it,—in harmony with what was said regarding the natural impulses (pp. 431 f., 443 f.). In doing so, in order not to come into conflict with the facts of ethnology, we must distinguish between the degree of civilization, and that of moral and religious condition: even in our own experience, the two things by no means coincide, in spite of the close connexion between them. Again, Dogmatics must be on its guard against overestimating the significance of individual facts, like the tendency towards monotheism which is seen by many who are occupied in the Mission Field, in religions which in other respects occupy a very low plane; just as in general these facts are sedulously underestimated or denied on the other side. For in the nature of the case, there can be no historical knowledge in the strict sense on the one side or on the other. Coming to particulars, we may leave it an open question whether the first actual sin is to be placed very early, or after mankind had experienced a somewhat lengthy development; the latter view would perhaps bring the conception which is here in question, nearer to our other ideas regarding the beginnings of our race, and no obvious interest of faith is dependent on the opposite assumption. This seems rather to be the case in refer-

ence to the view that all have one common descent, inasmuch as the hypothesis of a first sin occurring at different points seems to render less probable its explanation in freedom ; only if we take the idea of freedom seriously, even this objection, we may hold, is not insuperable. If man's original condition is defined in this way, an actual Fall, a first actual sin, is not so inconceivable as it was on the view of his first state held by our old divines. It can be regarded as inconceivable only by those who deny freedom at every later stage of the development. In principle every decision truly free is always equally conceivable or inconceivable ; if only the presupposition for it which is undoubtedly necessary, namely actual temptation, is admitted in all respects, as was done by us to the full in the foregoing.

As regards the *consequences* of the first sin, if we distinguish again, as we did when criticizing the traditional doctrine of the church, between *what* it is that is transmitted to us, and *how* it is transmitted, we have to insist, in reference to the former question, that it is by no means the case that all sin is the direct consequence of the first one, so that properly speaking there is no other. On the contrary, the first sin is the ground of those sins, which when we had the facts of the case before us, we were unable to explain as due to the freedom of all individuals, and which therefore, if they are not the result of the first sin as an act of man's free choice, must be attributed to God. But it is equally certain that the first sin, being first, is not of practically the same consequence as the others, but as we shall see more clearly when dealing with our second point, it is in a class by itself, far more serious in its results and harmful than any other can possibly be. Or more precisely, sinfulness, as we had to admit it in ourselves, considered apart from redemption, is the out-

come of a course of sinning into which, after it started with the first sin, every individual and every generation enter, adding their own quota of personal sin, avoidable and unavoidable, to the common store, but in which on the other side no good working in an opposite direction is lost; so that the course is not merely one of sin, but also of redemption, not merely one of inherited sin, if we may use this expression, but of inherited blessing as well. Neither the first sin (whether directly or indirectly), nor sinfulness, so far as it has its roots in this course of sinning, is reckoned as personal guilt to every one who is involved in this course of sin on the part of the human race, but our personal assent to and augmentation of the common store, rooted in the free decisions of our own wills, and differing as they do greatly in extent. This naturally includes all the consequences of such decisions,—an important principle which keeps the concept of guilt, purged of exaggeration, from appearing to be externalized or falsely lightened. But now the portion included in this measureless kingdom of sin (cf. p. 441 ff.) which cannot be conceived either as unavoidable sin, on the ground of its being acts resulting from the free-will of all, or as a freshly added act of the free-will of individuals, the portion consequently which, were there no assumption of a Fall, would have to be referred to God,—this, as we stated at the outset, would have to be conceived as the result of the first free decision against the good, of a Fall in the beginning of history.

We turn now to the way in which the effect of this first sin is transmitted. It affects in the first instance the first sinner himself, making him weaker in the presence of subsequent temptation, doubly so in view of the far greater plasticity of primordial nature. The first sin, and all the sins of the first sinners which follow

upon it, influence those living at the time and those who come after in their collective capacity, first of all and principally in the form of an offence or stumbling-block (pp. 441 ff.). This applies also to all the stages of the subsequent development. Besides there is actual transmission certainly not of sin nor yet of guilt as such, but of a character, of physical and mental tendencies on the part both of the race and of the individual, which inevitably lead to sin, and which powerfully foster temptation until it issues in sin involving guilt. When we define the effects of the first sin in this accurate fashion, we see a real meaning in the idea of a divine judgment upon it baldly expressed by our old theologians. For although there may seem to be little wisdom or justice in attributing, by reason of the sin of the founder of the race, direct personal guilt to all his descendants, on the other hand the Christian view of God makes it quite easy for us to understand that the divine love as holy would leave sin free to develop all its consequences, and would not wish to conquer it except in a manner truly moral, by way of freedom. This also gives its proper place to the truth that sin belongs to the divine order solely in relation to redemption.

Some such development of the doctrine of the Church, it may be added, would best harmonize with all the statements regarding the origin of sin contained in the New Testament, and especially with the detailed Pauline exposition in Romans v. 12 ff. ; which speaks indeed neither of a direct imputation of the first sin to all the descendants of the first man, nor of its mere first appearance, it being necessarily rooted in man's fleshly nature ; and which must be reconciled with the emphatic testimony of the apostle to the great extent to which sin is unavoidable in the kingdom of sin, as well as to the depth of the sense of guilt. We see the necessity of this all the

more when we feel ourselves completely free from the opinion, that a dialectical harmonization of the separate statements has been effected. It may be affirmed without further comparison in detail that such a reconstruction of the doctrine of the Church, in dependence upon the fundamental thoughts of the New Testament, does much fuller justice than any of the other theories to the actual facts of sin as previously expounded. We have arranged all these theories, according to a well-determined principle, in the conviction that the accurate definition of the nature of sin gives the norm for the theories of its origin. And now the main point in the view which was developed last is the unity of the two leading interests which in the other cases appear as antagonistic. On the one hand, we deal seriously with the truth that ours is the guilt, and God's the glory: God is in no way the Author of sin; and on the other hand, we deal similarly with the fact that sin is in great measure unavoidable.

And we cannot see how the objection could apply to this theory that it favours man's convenience, and that the seriousness of the conflict with sin is diminished. It is much more to the point that here in conclusion reference should be made to one other respect in which the superiority of the theory is very marked. The exaggeration of the old divines regarding the consequences of the first sin concentrated attention in a one-sided way upon the past. This used to be done with a profound sense of guilt, and men were kept from despair only by looking to the "second Adam". But after this feeling came to lose its reality, such retrospection was given up altogether as valueless. It was said now that good is done only by looking forward: to do this brings stimulus and power. We are co-workers in God's great conflict with sin; let us forget the dim and distant beginnings,

rejoice in what we have already achieved, and press on towards the goal in front of us. This is certainly a noble and genuinely Christian thought; at the same time it is only through faith in the living God that faith in an ultimate goal to be surely reached, has become a power in the world and in the individual soul. But is not one root of its power to be found in the assurance which we are capable of experiencing, that there is actual guilt in sloth and in too slow an advance along this path to the goal? If this is true of *our* struggle after what lies ahead of us, why is it not true of every stage of the struggle which lies behind us? Unless we are fully in earnest in regard to the sense of guilt in our development, we shall have a false contentment with ourselves, thinking that we could not have done more than we have done; if we are fully in earnest, we do honour to those before us by thinking the same of them. In this way the idea that their progress like ours was accompanied right through by the sense of guilt, not of necessity but as a matter of fact, brings us into close, essential connexion with the past back to the earliest obscure beginnings of history. To look behind us in a right and intelligent spirit enlarges and deepens our outlook upon life, and helps us to realize its full seriousness, shattering all complacency, but, because of the certainty of redemption, not producing despair.

An Ultimate Enigma

After all, this development of the Church doctrine is not regarded as a perfectly satisfactory solution even by all who accept it. There are others who will prefer on the whole the view of Rothe, of which we have spoken (cf. p. 466 f.), though likewise with a feeling of its inadequacy upon other grounds. All of them will have to

admit that, in spite of both these theories of the origin of sin, there still remains a question which we have not yet considered. An ultimate enigma presents itself, though there is often no distinct realization of it as such. Our explicit distinction between sin and guilt (pp. 433 ff., 443 ff.), forced upon us by the facts of the case, has taught us how far there is inevitable sin, which all the same in the last resort is not due to the will of God, but is capable of being understood as the consequence of human guilt, not ours but that of those before us and round about us. Only this raises the further question, which we have just described as the ultimate *problem*—Why have all involved themselves in *personal guilt* (for we have stated it as the conviction of the Christian Church upon the basis of revelation that all have done so)? Why has no one (apart from the Redeemer) so opposed hereditary sin, when he recognized it, that he remained without personal guilt? Naturally we must not seek to "explain" this fact; that would be to do away with our concept of guilt, and the power of truly free decision involved in it. But the fact that no single person has used the freedom asserted, so to resist sin as to continue without personal guilt, though not without sin, constitutes for us, none the less, quite a specially perplexing enigma. The pleas which prompt us to throw suspicion on freedom itself automatically rise to our lips once more.

Indeed at this stage of our discussion, they force themselves upon our consideration with increasing urgency, wearied as we are with so many attempts. They assume the form of the tempting question whether we seriously think that the love of God could reveal itself in all its depths, or that we could trust in it as love at its highest, unless it were love for sinners. The old saying, "O blessed guilt," has again a fresh at-

tractiveness, while it is understood in a different way. Ought we not boldly "to thank God even for sin," more heartily and unreservedly than for anything else, looking upon it as occasioning the supreme triumph of His eternal love and wisdom? The effect of this challenge upon a generation fascinated by the idea of necessity can scarcely be overestimated. Its essential falsity, however, is proved by a simple consideration. We must take out of the statement made above only what it really says, not what it seems to say because of a bias on our part. That is, it is only in relation to sin as actually *guilty* that the Divine love reveals itself in its incomparable glory, and the quality of our gratitude is due to the fact that it forgives our actual guilt and sin. Could there be any gratitude, if God as the Author of sin produced in us feelings of guilt, not true to the actual facts, however surprising His skill in so doing? (If we referred to man we should use another word than skill.) On the other hand, if the statement is taken to mean that for the perfect revelation of His love God requires actual and not merely apparent guilt and sin on our part, we are at the limit of our human dialectic, where Paul himself would no longer draw conclusions, but protested against doing so (Rom. III. 8). The view that we ought to think of guilt as blessed and boldly to give thanks even for sin, commends itself to our Christian consciousness as true and Christian, only if held along with a real sense of personal guilt—great guilt. The depth of the love of God as it reveals itself in the forgiveness of guilt, does not do away with the depth of the guilt which is really ours, but first shows it in its depth.

It is a mistake therefore to yield to the siren strains of the doctrine of necessity. This is so even when they assume their most alluring form. If Dogmatics is to be

scientific, it must firmly maintain the principle that imperfect understanding of the ultimate grounds of facts does not warrant our modifying the facts. The determined reduction of freedom to necessity is impossible without doing violence to a fact of the inner life. And to what fact? Not to some fact of little moment, but to one which we cannot deny without an evil conscience, the fact of the evil conscience itself, that is of guilt. We must therefore definitively reject all such "explanations" of the sin that involves guilt as take us beyond the idea that God, inasmuch as He wills personal fellowship in love, wills freedom, and the real possibility too of closing up one's heart against that love, because that means the real possibility of having personal trust in it; for otherwise He would not have willed personal fellowship in love. This matter was considered when we dealt with the question of the image of God in man, and with the idea of the love of God and of human sin; where it is also pointed out that in all the stages of God's condescending approach, we must conceive of a corresponding assent or refusal on man's part, which culminates only when God's Revelation of Himself has been perfected.

We retract nothing of what we have said as to the guiltiness that cleaves to men in general being inexplicable; but simply for the sake of completeness we add that at this closing point of our discussion on the origin of sin, two theories, which we must reject as theories because they furnish no really satisfactory solution, are only now fully intelligible. One has already been mentioned, the theory of *a Fall of Spirits anterior to time.* While there is an express rejection of any mythological treatment of the idea, it may, strange as this seems, actually commend itself anew to modern thought; namely in order to render more intelligible that en-

tanglement of all which was spoken of, not only in a kingdom of sin but of guilt. We men on earth as a whole would be a kingdom of fallen spirits, "the lost son" in the world of spirits. But only that speculative reason which has not been subjected to criticism, will imagine that it is capable of attaining real knowledge as to this. The same must be our conclusion, if, as was mentioned above, the idea of a Fall anterior to time resolves itself strictly into that of an act of intelligible freedom.

For the purposes of Dogmatics, it is further advisable to recall a matter which belongs to the *history of dogma;* and that is the second addition we have to make in our closing observations on the ultimate enigma. Our attitude may be regarded as a return to the original position of our Reformers (as distinguished from that of the Old Protestant Dogmatics), allowance being made for the different epistemology of our day. I do not mean that it is a return to their position in all the details once associated with it; for as we have often pointed out, these details partly do not at all correspond with the nature of sin as we have accurately determined it (reciprocal action in the Kingdom of Sin, differences of degree in regard to sin and guilt). Nor again is it in any way a return to the form which the last idea regarding the origin of sin assumed in the hands of the Reformers, but to their ruling motive, which the form of their thought often concealed rather than explained. Calvin, for example, tells us that "God had the best and most righteous purpose in ordering the fall of man, and the thought of sin is altogether foreign to the divine order". Such too is the teaching of Zwingli and Luther, and in fact even of the German text of the Augsburg Confession, when it says that the godless turn from God to evil as soon as God withdraws His hand from them.

This view, known as Supralapsarianism, because the will of God includes the fall of the first man, if construed as a theory of the origin of sin, quite obviously belongs in one point of view to the necessitarian theories; on the other hand, however, seeing that the intention is in no way to refer sin to God, but on the contrary, Adam falls "according to the Divine appointment, but by reason of his own guilt," the doctrine of necessity is emphatically rejected as impious. How it is possible to affirm both these statements at the same time is not shown; on the contrary their incomprehensibility is openly admitted. "If a person says, 'That is beyond my comprehension,' I reply, 'It is beyond mine also'" (Luther). But it is just here that this view differs from the theories which believe it possible to prove the inevitableness of sin, or at least to understand its congruity with the Christian idea of God. For this same reason we must not identify the standpoint of the Reformers with modern Determinism. The specific characteristic of their standpoint is the admission that we have no logically consistent knowledge upon the subject; they are perfectly serious in attributing the guilt to the human will; and their regarding it as embraced by the Divine will is simply an equally earnest emphasizing of religious dependence upon God.

There must always, and especially in our own day, be many who, after traversing the mazy paths of attempted solutions with all the profundity of thought they display, without finding satisfaction, are ready to welcome such an admission, if genuine and not merely formal, not one which always really claims to comprehend the incomprehensible, and so is only an embellishment of the admission that sin is necessary, and consequently is an empty play with words. These will make the confession—"we do not understand the solution in which

we believe" (Lotze). Here again we are face to face with the one limit to our knowledge which we cannot get over, the problem namely of how the finite is related to the infinite, or of time and eternity, upon which we have already touched repeatedly, and which will come before us on various subsequent occasions. Only in the present instance it is still clearer than in other cases that the question here at stake is that of our moral and religious existence itself. It is not a metaphysical problem to which we may be indifferent; it involves our inmost personal religious life, this life indeed in its ultimate depths. In such a frame of mind we repeat perhaps the words of the same philosopher: "The roots of metaphysics lie in Ethics". This does not mark any addition to our knowledge, but it is an admission that there is a limit to all our assent-compelling knowledge. Only it is not with the resignation of despair that we make this admission, but in gratitude for the knowledge actually bestowed upon us in faith. This knowledge is sufficiently extensive and certain to make us feel that, in the limit of which we have spoken, we have not a danger to faith, but an incentive to turn it to account in fighting the battle of life. Such a faith goes beyond the well-weighed words of the poet, "It is to leave Freedom's entrancing form undisturbed that God suffers the hideous host of evils to rage in His world" (Goethe). For what we have to do with is not a form that entrances the esthetic sense, but the supreme reality of the ethical world, the significance of which we may express in the faith that love wills freedom. In this faith we understand the very limit of our knowledge, at this point as at all others, and at this point in a new and special way, as a limit which is necessary in the interest of faith. And shining through all our uncertainty as to ultimate problems, faith has a certainty which cannot be shaken,

that the love of God reveals its Divine riches to every one, denying itself eternally to no one who opens his heart to it; and that at the last there is accordingly only one form of guilt, namely deliberate opposition to God's love. This certainty is of more value for the religious knowledge of the Christian than the theories we have had before us, elaborated though they are in detail: they all really failed to give entire satisfaction. (Cf. "Doctrine of Predestination and Eschatology". On the problem of Freedom itself see Ethics (pp. 76 ff.).)

We insist once again upon the necessity of recognizing the question of the *nature* of evil, as the decisive one by comparison with that of its *origin*, and of giving due heed to the consequences which follow directly from its nature according to our careful determination of it, particularly with reference to the Kingdom of Evil. This much at least we have as the result of our long search.

For Dogmatics, no further light is shed upon the aspect of the great problem which has brought us to the conclusion last discussed, by the Biblical idea of the EVIL ONE, as the Prince of this world, i.e. of the Kingdom of Sin. For unless we transform the superhuman Adversary of God and Tempter of man into a second God, which would be Dualism and consequently Infra-Christian, the difficulty is merely transferred to another point. So far as the idea deserves a place in Dogmatics at all, exactly the same is true with reference to method as was said at the beginning of our section on angels. Taking this for granted, we may confine ourselves to the *common objections*, to *the attitude of Jesus* and to the *fundamental principle* resulting from this. We shall consider even those points briefly. The idea would certainly gain in interest by a reference to "The History of the Devil". This is a widely diffused and deep current of superstition in which

the purer sources whence it springs are almost entirely lost. Our interest, apart from these, mostly centres round the new tributary current which has its origin in the German sense of sin, and issues in a deepening of the ancient tradition. Of this the last and the classical example is Luther. To be sure it is now that the most horrible features also appear (trials for witchcraft). Then there comes the characteristic reconsideration which the idea received in our classical poetry, above all in Goethe's Faust, after Rationalism had, as was supposed, perfectly cleared the air for all time. And lastly there is the external revival of the old doctrine, which provoked the equally external antithesis, "If there is no devil, there is no redemption" (Strauss in reply to Vilmar).

Omitting all this, we must first of all establish the position that *the arguments against* taking the idea seriously, which are regarded by many as unanswerable, and yet have scarcely ever been formulated with precision, when taken collectively are certainly worthy of the most earnest consideration, but they are not irrefutable. *In the first place*, it is said that such a combination of intelligence and wickedness as is attributed to the devil is absurd, and that the very idea of an embodiment of evil is self-contradictory. But in the sphere of human wickedness experience testifies clearly enough to both realities. When sin has attained to a certain measure of self-consciousness, it actually shows a wonderful mastery of the art of embodying itself in visible form; and without the combination of intelligence and wickedness we could have none of those manifestations of evil, to which significantly enough we give the name of diabolical. *In the second place*, in our question as in others a great part is played by the circumstance that the idea of the devil admits of explanation, and that too both on historical and on psychological grounds, as an intrusion from other religions and as due to the enigmatic

character of sin. Sin is experienced by us, we are told, as a contradiction to our vocation, indeed putting the matter generally as a self-contradiction. Thus it appears, especially on account of the rapid and inexplicable way in which our moods change, as a power which we cannot understand; how natural it is then to find the origin of it outside of ourselves. Doubtless the person who rejects the idea of a devil will thus explain it. But no proof is adduced, and none can be adduced, that it must be explained in this way and in this way only. Further it is said that belief in a devil is dangerous in a religious point of view; it furnishes an excuse for indolent self-justification, and it occasions harrowing self-torture. Without doubt, it does both in many cases, as every one knows who has much experience of pastoral work. But do these objections attach to belief in a devil, as we meet with it in Ephesians VI. 11? In what is there said of the Christian armour for the conflict with the unseen foe, does it minister to self-complacency or to self-torture? Or in what Jesus says of evil? Again *lastly* it is said that at all events the belief is useless and of no religious significance, for it makes no difference to any aspect of the Christian judgment of sin. Those who assert this most vehemently often do least to prove it by a careful doctrine of sin. But it brings us to our second point, *the attitude of Jesus.*

We must make the words of Jesus our starting-point; for our decision in the matter of the narratives of the demoniacs is naturally determined by our decision regarding the devil and his Kingdom, and not vice versa; especially as in our day even those who are convinced of his existence look upon the "possessed" as suffering from some disease. With reference then to the words of Jesus, the question must *first* be asked: Is it possible to understand them figuratively? So far as the mere words go, in some cases it certainly is,—perhaps Matthew

xiii. 19, 39, e.g. But in other cases it is impossible, namely where He speaks of His own work as a conflict with and victory over the Evil One (Mt. xii. 25 ff., Luke x. 18, with parallels). This raises the further question: Is conscious accommodation on the part of Jesus to contemporary ideas of the devil conceivable? Certainly not; at this point it would be incompatible with His truthfulness as well as with His wisdom as a teacher. So we come to *the decisive* question: May we assume that His knowledge was limited? Doubtless much greater caution is called for here than when we suggest such limitations in other directions. In ordinary secular matters no one will for reasons of faith attribute to Jesus perfect knowledge, but will take it for granted that He shared the ideas of His people and His time as regards the sun and the earth for example. Many will reserve judgment for a time as to whether Jesus intended to bind us by what He said upon a historical fact, the authorship of a Psalm, let us say (Mt. xxii. 43 ff.); still more so, as to whether He expected to come again in the course of the generation then alive. Yet even in this last instance, should it be settled that His words regarding His return do not admit of any other interpretation, Jesus' own disclaimer (Mk. xiii. 32), will act as a relief to faith. But can we conceive of the Redeemer from evil as speaking of the Evil One, in essential dependence upon the consciousness of His day, and not out of the depths of His own personality?

In view of the simple fact which we have already had before us, that in the consciousness of Jesus we must distinguish different circles nearer to and further from the centre, it is at least our duty not to rule this question out of court as raised by unbelief, but to consider it carefully in its distinctive nature. Further we have learned in our Apologetics why such examination is incumbent upon us: because revelation

has throughout but one single purpose, to bring God near to us, and because on that account it is throughout personal. Now no evangelical Christian can deny that the question before us has received different answers from those who recognize each other as being at one in their faith in Christ. The reason is that which we have just indicated, that the affirmations of Jesus regarding the Evil One cannot be the object of direct personal religious experience, like those regarding His relation to the Father, our sin, His love which saves sinners. If therefore *Dogmatics* cannot show that this idea is an integral part of saving faith, it must content itself with stating carefully under what conditions the affirmative and the negative answers to the question of the idea of a devil are to be accepted as Christian within the Christian Church.

Such conditions apply on both sides. The person who thinks that he can *dispense with* this belief, not in a spirit of levity, but as the result of well-considered religious conviction (in the spirit of Rom. XIV. 5, 23), is manifestly under obligation to prove that his *judgment upon sin* is essentially unaffected—that there is no minimizing of its power and danger, especially in the Kingdom of sin and of the offence which it occasions. For it is only if this is so that he can have the confidence which he cannot do without, that the idea in question does not belong to the inmost kernel of Jesus' consciousness as the Redeemer from sin ; otherwise, not being at one with Him in His estimate of sin, he could not be assured of His redemption either. Along with this there is *another* point that he must satisfy himself upon : while accepting without qualification the position that revelation is given to us in history and is thus historically conditioned, he must see to it that his refusal to believe in a devil, so far from infringing upon the absoluteness of revelation, on the contrary makes it all the more indubitable and trustworthy. Consequently it is specially important

that he should note how clearly the words of Jesus upon this subject as upon others ring out in their purity through the musty sultry atmosphere of contemporary superstition. So much with regard to the person who rejects the belief. Others will hold themselves bound *to submit to the authority of Jesus* in this as in other matters. Their duty is twofold: to be clear about the exact grounds of their submission, and to keep the content of the idea strictly within the limits of the New Testament evidence. They will not count it a part of saving faith in the strictest sense, nor will they hold that it is as directly involved therein as is the sinlessness of Jesus for example. But on the basis of their saving faith in Him, they believe Him in this matter too as the trustworthy witness regarding a mystery of the unseen world, belonging to the outer limit of the revelation which faith makes available for our experience. Accordingly they refuse to go a step beyond the explicit statements of Jesus, or the testimony of the original church which keeps within these limits. Rejecting all imaginary pictorial details, they will sum up this testimony in something like this fashion. The Kingdom of human sin is integrally connected with evil found outside of man, which comes to a climax in a personal evil will. As regards his *nature*, he is the perfect embodiment of what is the inmost nature of sin generally—lack of religion, enmity to God, because "wishing to be God" of the creation: "If there were a God I myself would desire to be such, and therefore I hate God" (Nietzsche). Compare the way in which the incarnation of the spirit opposed to Christ in a person is described in 2 Thessalonians II., while in 1 John denial of the unique relation of the Son to the Father constitutes the character of the Antichrist or Antichrists. In ordinary speech we naturally give the name of devilish to deliberate opposition to the good and consummate pleasure in

what is evil, in all its principal manifestations of which we have often spoken, the most thoroughgoing of which, however, is just such opposition to God. The *work* of this evil being consists in temptation, that is in deliberate and intentional giving of offence. Inasmuch as temptation always consists in offering counterfeit good, while moreover evil itself in the last resort as compared with good is mere pretence and falsehood, the evil one is called the Liar; and because the counterfeit, or lie as such, is the opposite of life, is fatal to life and is death, he is called the murderer of men. Both of these he has been from the beginning, for the reason that he has made the human race feel his power in this his nature from the beginning of their history onwards (John VIII. 44). As the spirit of the world changes with the changing years, his work of fatal deceit also assumes various forms and colours. It may thus be pre-eminently effective in generally making light of, and throwing ridicule upon, the whole idea. If there is an evil one, his masterstroke is the skill with which he destroys belief in his own reality. Every generation may see his opposition in the special difficulties they have in getting to the invisible God. This applies both to epidemic indifference towards God, and to the caricatures found in low types of religion. Then on this presupposition, if the devil was spoken of as silly, it was simply a humorous expedient especially of the German popular spirit, in self-defence against the oppressive burden of an idea which was anything but a joke. It was thus in principle a judgment of faith in the victory of the Kingdom of God. (With reference to what are called "temptations of the devil," see "Ethics".)

Thus we may express the arguments for and against. We see clearly that the two sides approach each other far more closely than they seem to do at first sight. But every one must decide the question for himself upon the basis of the principles above enunciated.

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